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*Seventh-day Adventists Answer*

# QUESTIONS on DOCTRINE

*AN EXPLANATION OF CERTAIN MAJOR ASPECTS  
OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST BELIEF*



*Prepared by a Representative Group of  
Seventh-day Adventist Leaders, Bible Teachers,  
and Editors*

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# Introduction

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This book came into being to meet a definite need. Interest concerning Seventh-day Adventist belief and work has increased as the movement has grown. But in recent years especially, there seems to be a desire on the part of many non-Adventists for a clearer understanding of our teachings and objectives. Uncertainty regarding our basic beliefs is abundantly evident in much of the literature published concerning us. There are already many books purporting to give the story of this people.

Recently, however, one of the large Protestant publishing houses here in the United States planned the production of still another book. An author of several works dealing with the history and beliefs of certain religious groups was requested to produce this new book, the purpose of which was to present a general review of our history and belief. It was to be an objective analysis, with particular emphasis in those areas wherein Adventist teachings differ from some other Christian groups.

In order to be factual in his treatment of the subject this author did what authors in general have failed to do: he visited our denominational headquarters in Washington, D.C., and obtained firsthand information. Moreover, he came not for just a single visit, but in company with other scholars made a number of trips to the General Conference covering a period of almost

two years. Hundreds of hours went into this research, and hundreds of books and pamphlets, both Adventist and non-Adventist, were examined. In addition there were a large number of interviews. During these many months of study, the major aspects of Adventist teaching were carefully analyzed. The inquiries growing out of this investigation were ultimately couched in a series of searching questions to which comprehensive answers were requested.

The replies were prepared by a group of recognized leaders, in close counsel with Bible teachers, editors, and administrators. The goal was to set forth our basic beliefs in terminology currently used in theological circles. This was *not* to be a new statement of faith, but rather an answer to specific questions concerning our faith. It was natural that these answers would come within the framework of the official statement of Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists which appears in our *Church Manual* and is included in this volume, pages 11-18. In view of this fact, these answers represent the position of our denomination in the area of church doctrine and prophetic interpretation.

As the work on the answers progressed, it was felt that our church members would be equally benefited by the material being prepared, and therefore it was decided to publish the completed work in book form. So this volume came into being. While the form of the work is rather unusual, it will, we trust, meet a definite need.

The writers, counselors, and editors who produced the answers to these questions have labored conscientiously to state accurately the beliefs of Seventh-day

Adventists. But because of the very nature of the Seventh-day Adventist Church organization no statement of Seventh-day Adventist belief can be considered official unless it is adopted by the General Conference in quadrennial session, when accredited delegates from the whole world field are present. The answers in this volume are an expansion of our doctrinal positions contained in the official statement of Fundamental Beliefs already referred to. Hence this volume can be viewed as truly representative of the faith and beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Those who have prepared these answers make no claim that they have provided the final word on Christian doctrine. Seventh-day Adventists believe that man's understanding of God's truth is progressive. "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day" (Prov. 4:18). We surely should know more of God's will and purpose than did righteous men of earlier ages. And in days to come we should rightly expect further unfolding of Bible truth.

While we accept the Bible and the Bible only as our rule of faith and practice, we clearly recognize that we do not understand perfectly all truth which God would have His children know today. Nor have we ever claimed such knowledge. We honor the noble line of witnesses such as Wycliffe, Luther, Tyndale, Calvin, Knox, Wesley, and other great leaders of the past, whose advance into new light led the church forward in its fuller understanding of God's will. And we believe that God has given special light in these last days that is in advance of the gospel light perceived by earlier Christian leaders.

In harmony with the apostolic injunction, "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Peter 3:15), we have here sought to give reasons for our faith. We invite our Christian friends to examine these answers in the light of the Word of God.

The officers of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists felt that the material appearing in this volume would not only be helpful to the members of their own church but that it would also furnish reliable information on Adventist beliefs and teachings to the many inquiries, that, in recent years, have arisen regarding Adventist doctrines. They have therefore requested that this book be published for general use with the fervent prayer and hope that it may be useful in making clearer the way of salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ.

THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

# *Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists*

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Seventh-day Adventists hold certain fundamental beliefs, the principal features of which, together with a portion of the scriptural references upon which they are based, may be summarized as follows:

1. That the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, contain an all-sufficient revelation of His will to men, and are the only unerring rule of faith and practice (2 Tim. 3:15-17).

2. That the Godhead, or Trinity, consists of the Eternal Father, a personal, spiritual Being, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, infinite in wisdom and love; the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Eternal Father, through whom all things were created and through whom the salvation of the redeemed hosts will be accomplished; the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead, the great regenerating power in the work of redemption (Matt. 28:19).

3. That Jesus Christ is very God, being of the same nature and essence as the Eternal Father. While retaining His divine nature He took upon Himself the nature of the human family, lived on the earth as a man, exemplified in His life as our example the principles of righteousness, attested His relationship to God by many mighty miracles, died for our sins on the cross, was raised from the dead, and ascended to the Father, where He ever lives to make intercession for us

(John 1:1, 14; Heb. 2:9-18; 8:1, 2; 4:14-16; 7:25).

4. That every person in order to obtain salvation must experience the new birth; that this comprises an entire transformation of life and character by the re-creative power of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (John 3:16; Matt. 18:3; Acts 2:37-39).

5. That baptism is an ordinance of the Christian church and should follow repentance and forgiveness of sins. By its observance faith is shown in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. That the proper form of baptism is by immersion (Rom. 6:1-6; Acts 16:30-33.)

6. That the will of God as it relates to moral conduct is comprehended in His law of ten commandments; that these are great moral, unchangeable precepts, binding upon all men, in every age (Ex. 20:1-17).

7. That the fourth commandment of this unchangeable law requires the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath. This holy institution is at the same time a memorial of creation and a sign of sanctification, a sign of the believer's rest from his own works of sin, and his entrance into the rest of soul which Jesus promises to those who come to Him. (Gen. 2:1-3; Ex. 20:8-11; 31:12-17; Heb. 4:1-10.)

8. That the law of ten commandments points out sin, the penalty of which is death. The law cannot save the transgressor from his sin, nor impart power to keep him from sinning. In infinite love and mercy, God provides a way whereby this may be done. He furnishes a substitute, even Christ the Righteous One, to die in man's stead, making "him to be sin for us, who knew

no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:21). That one is justified, not by obedience to the law, but by the grace that is in Christ Jesus. By accepting Christ, man is reconciled to God, justified by His blood for the sins of the past, and saved from the power of sin by His indwelling life. Thus the gospel becomes "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth" (Rom. 1:16). This experience is wrought by the divine agency of the Holy Spirit, who convinces of sin and leads to the Sin Bearer, inducting the believer into the new covenant relationship, where the law of God is written on his heart, and through the enabling power of the indwelling Christ, his life is brought into conformity to the divine precepts. The honor and merit of this wonderful transformation belong wholly to Christ. (1 John 2:1, 2; 3:4; Rom. 3:20; 5:8-10; 7:7; Eph. 2:8-10; 3:17; Gal. 2:20; Heb. 8:8-12.)

9. That "God only hath immortality" (1 Tim. 6:16). Mortal man possesses a nature inherently sinful and dying. Eternal life is the gift of God through faith in Christ (Rom. 6:23). "He that hath the Son hath life" (1 John 5:12). Immortality is bestowed upon the righteous at the second coming of Christ, when the righteous dead are raised from the grave and the living righteous translated to meet the Lord. Then it is that those accounted faithful "put on immortality." (1 Cor. 15:51-55.)

10. That the condition of man in death is one of unconsciousness. That all men, good and evil alike, remain in the grave from death to the resurrection. (Eccl. 9:5, 6; Ps. 146:3, 4; John 5:28, 29.)

11. That there shall be a resurrection both of the just and of the unjust. The resurrection of the just will take place at the second coming of Christ; the resurrection of the unjust will take place a thousand years later, at the close of the millennium. (John 5:28, 29; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; Rev. 20:5-10.)

12. That the finally impenitent, including Satan, the author of sin, will, by the fires of the last day, be reduced to a state of nonexistence, becoming as though they had not been, thus purging God's universe of sin and sinners (Rom. 6:23; Mal. 4:1-3; Rev. 20:9, 10; Obadiah 16).

13. That no prophetic period is given in the Bible to reach the second advent, but that the longest one, the 2300 days of Daniel 8:14, terminated in 1844, and brought us to an event called the cleansing of the sanctuary.

14. That the true sanctuary, of which the tabernacle on earth was a type, is the temple of God in heaven, of which Paul speaks in Hebrews 8 and onward, and of which the Lord Jesus, as our great high priest, is minister; that the priestly work of our Lord is the antitype of the work of the Jewish priests of the former dispensation; that this heavenly sanctuary is the one to be cleansed at the end of the 2300 days of Daniel 8:14, its cleansing being, as in the type, a work of judgment, beginning with the entrance of Christ as the high priest upon the judgment phase of His ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, fore-shadowed in the earthly service of cleansing the sanctuary on the day of atonement. This work of judg-

ment in the heavenly sanctuary began in 1844. Its completion will close human probation.

15. That God, in the time of the judgment and in accordance with His uniform dealing with the human family in warning them of coming events vitally affecting their destiny (Amos 3:6, 7), sends forth a proclamation of the approach of the second advent of Christ; that this work is symbolized by the three angels of Revelation 14; and that their threefold message brings to view a work of reform to prepare a people to meet Him at His coming.

16. That the time of the cleansing of the sanctuary, synchronizing with the period of the proclamation of the message of Revelation 14, is a time of investigative judgment; first, with reference to the dead, and second, with reference to the living. This investigative judgment determines who of the myriads sleeping in the dust of the earth are worthy of a part in the first resurrection, and who of its living multitudes are worthy of translation. (1 Peter 4:17, 18; Dan. 7:9, 10; Rev. 14:6, 7; Luke 20:35.)

17. That the followers of Christ should be a godly people, not adopting the unholy maxims or conforming to the unrighteous ways of the world, not loving its sinful pleasures or countenancing its follies. That believers should recognize their bodies as the temple of the Holy Spirit, and that therefore they should clothe that body in neat, modest, dignified apparel. Further, that in eating and drinking and in their entire course of conduct they should shape their lives as becometh followers of the meek and lowly Master. Thus the followers of Christ will be led to abstain from all intoxicants.

cating drinks, tobacco, and other narcotics, and to avoid every body- and soul-defiling habit and practice. (1 Cor. 3:16, 17; 9:25; 10:31; 1 Tim. 2:9, 10; 1 John 2:6.)

18. That the divine principle of tithes and offerings for the support of the gospel is an acknowledgment of God's ownership in our lives, and that we are stewards who must render account to Him of all that He has committed to our possession (Lev. 27:30; Mal. 3:8-12; Matt. 23:23; 1 Cor. 9:9-14; 2 Cor. 9:6-15).

19. That God has placed in His church the gifts of the Holy Spirit, as enumerated in 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4. That these gifts operate in harmony with the divine principles of the Bible, and are given for the perfecting of the saints, the work of the ministry, the edifying of the body of Christ (Rev. 12:17; 19:10; 1 Cor. 1:5-7). That the gift of the Spirit of prophecy is one of the identifying marks of the remnant church. (1 Cor. 1:5, 7; 12:1, 28; Rev. 12:17; 19:10; Amos 3:7; Hosea 12:10, 13.) They recognize that this gift was manifested in the life and ministry of Ellen G. White.

20. That the second coming of Christ is the great hope of the church, the grand climax of the gospel and plan of salvation. His coming will be literal, personal, and visible. Many important events will be associated with His return, such as the resurrection of the dead, the destruction of the wicked, the purification of the earth, the reward of the righteous, the establishment of His everlasting kingdom. The almost complete fulfillment of various lines of prophecy, particularly those found in the books of Daniel and the Revelation, with existing conditions in the physical, social, industrial,

political, and religious worlds, indicates that Christ's coming "is near, even at the doors" (Matt. 24:33). The exact time of that event has not been foretold. Believers are exhorted to be ready, for "in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man" (Matt. 24:44) will be revealed. (Luke 17:26-30; 21:25-27; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:9-11; Rev. 1:7; Heb. 9:28; James 5:1-8; Joel 3:9-16; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; Dan. 7:27; Matt. 24:36, 44.)

21. That the millennial reign of Christ covers the period between the first and the second resurrections, during which time the saints of all ages will live with their blessed Redeemer in heaven. At the end of the millennium, the Holy City with all the saints will descend to the earth. The wicked, raised in the second resurrection, will go up on the breadth of the earth with Satan at their head to compass the camp of the saints, when fire will come down from God out of heaven and devour them. In the conflagration which destroys Satan and his host, the earth itself will be regenerated and cleansed from the effects of the curse. Thus the universe of God will be purified from the foul blot of sin. (Revelation 20; Zech. 14:1-4; 2 Peter 3:7-10.)

22. That God will make all things new. The earth, restored to its pristine beauty, will become forever the abode of the saints of the Lord. The promise to Abraham, that through Christ he and his seed should possess the earth throughout the endless ages of eternity, will be fulfilled. "The kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him" (Dan.

7:27). Christ the Lord will reign supreme, and every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, will ascribe “blessing, and honour, and glory, and power” unto “him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever” (Gen. 13:14-17; Rom. 4:13; Heb. 11:8-16; Matt. 5:5; Isaiah 35; Rev. 21:1-7; 5:13; Dan. 7:27).

## **I. Preliminary Questions**



# Doctrines We Share With Other Christians

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## QUESTION 1

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*What doctrines do Seventh-day Adventists hold in common with Christians in general, and in what aspects of Christian thought do they differ?*

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Christians in general are divided into various schools of thought on practically every doctrine of the Bible. On some doctrines Seventh-day Adventists find themselves in one group, and on other doctrines we may be classified quite differently. With some religious groups we hold many doctrines in common. With others we may find little common doctrinal ground. We do not accept certain doctrines held by some Christians because we feel they are not based on the Word of God.

Practically all Seventh-day Adventist beliefs are held by one or more Christian groups. A few are distinctive with us. Our beliefs could be classified in relation to the beliefs of other Christians under the following headings:

### I. In Common With Conservative Christians and the Historic Protestant Creeds, We Believe—

1. That God is the Sovereign Creator, upholder,

and ruler of the universe, and that He is eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent.

2. That the Godhead, the Trinity, comprises God the Father, Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

3. That the Scriptures are the inspired revelation of God to men; and that the Bible is the sole rule of faith and practice.

4. That Jesus Christ is very God, and that He has existed with the Father from all eternity.

5. That the Holy Spirit is a personal being, sharing the attributes of deity with the Father and the Son.

6. That Christ, the Word of God, became incarnate through the miraculous conception and the virgin birth; and that He lived an absolutely sinless life here on earth.

7. That the vicarious, atoning death of Jesus Christ, once for all, is all-sufficient for the redemption of a lost race.

8. That Jesus Christ arose literally and bodily from the grave.

9. That He ascended literally and bodily into heaven.

10. That He now serves as our advocate in priestly ministry and mediation before the Father.

11. That He will return in a premillennial, personal, imminent second advent.

12. That man was created sinless, but by his subsequent fall entered a state of alienation and depravity.

13. That salvation through Christ is by grace alone, through faith in His blood.

14. That entrance upon the new life in Christ is by regeneration, or the new birth.

15. That man is justified by faith.
16. That man is sanctified by the indwelling Christ through the Holy Spirit.
17. That man will be glorified at the resurrection or translation of the saints, when the Lord returns.
18. That there will be a judgment of all men.
19. That the gospel is to be preached as a witness to all the world.

**II. On Certain Controverted Doctrines Among Conservative Christians, We Hold One of Two or More Alternate Views. We Believe—**

1. That man is free to choose or reject the offer of salvation through Christ; we do not believe that God has predetermined that some men shall be saved and others lost.
2. That the moral law of ten commandments, or the Decalogue, is the standard of life and conduct for all men of all ages; we do not believe that the Decalogue has been either changed or abolished.
3. That baptism is to be administered by single immersion; we do not believe that it may be administered by sprinkling, pouring, or trine immersion.
4. That man was endowed at creation with conditional immortality; we do not believe that man has innate immortality or an immortal soul.
5. That the wicked will be punished by suffering and complete destruction in the lake of fire; we do not believe in an eternally burning hell in which souls are tormented without end.
6. That the seventh day of the week is the Sabbath; we do not believe that the Sabbath has been abolished,

changed to the first day, or is merely a seventh part of time.

7. That the principle of tithing is God's plan for the support of His church; we do not believe that tithing was only for the Jews.

8. That God created the world in six literal days; we do not believe that creation was accomplished by long aeons of evolutionary processes.

9. That the correct view of prophetic interpretation is best set forth by what is known as the historical school; we do not accept the systems followed by either the preterists or the futurists.

10. That church and state should operate in entirely separate spheres; we do not believe that in an attempt to control men's religion or religious activities the church should dominate the state, or that the state should govern the church.

11. That the ordinance instituted by Christ—that of washing one another's feet at the time of the Lord's Supper—is to be practiced; we do not believe that this was merely an accommodation to the customs and necessities of those times.

12. That we should abstain from such practices as the use of alcohol and tobacco; we do not believe that indulgence in these things is fully representative of the character of our Lord.

### III. In a Few Areas of Christian Thought, Our Doctrines Are Distinctive With Us. We Believe—

1. That there is a sanctuary in heaven where Christ, our High Priest, ministers in two distinct phases of His mediatorial work.

2. That there is to be an investigative judgment in which the destinies of all men are decided before Christ comes in the clouds of glory.
3. That the Spirit of prophecy, or the prophetic gift, is one of the gifts of the Spirit promised to the church in the last days, and that that gift was manifested to the Seventh-day Adventist Church in the work and writings of Ellen G. White.
4. That the seal of God and the mark of the beast, mentioned in Revelation, are the symbols of the opposing forces of good and evil in the last great conflict before Christ comes the second time.
5. That the three angels of Revelation 14 represent the proclamation of God's last message to the world in preparation for the coming of our Lord.

# The Bible, Only Rule of Faith and Practice

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## QUESTION 2

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*Regarding the inspiration of the Bible, do Seventh-day Adventists teach that the Bible is the very word of God, the only infallible rule for faith and practice?*

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Seventh-day Adventists believe that “all scripture,” both Old and New Testament, from Genesis to Revelation, was “given by inspiration of God” (2 Tim. 3:16), and constitutes the very word of God—the truth that “liveth and abideth for ever” (1 Peter 1:23). We recognize the Bible as the ultimate and final authority on what is truth. The Holy Scriptures came to us through the ministry of the prophets who spake and wrote “as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Peter 1:21). The apostles declared that the God who made the heavens and the earth spake through the mouth of David and the prophets of old (Acts 4:24-26; Matt. 1:22; 2:15; Acts 3:18-20; 28:25, 26; Heb. 1:1; 4:7).

And these chosen messengers of God declared that what was given through them was the very word of God (Isa. 43:1; 45:1; Jer. 17:19, 20; 18:1, 2; 22:1, 2; 26:1, 2). Paul reminded his converts that when they listened to the Scriptures being read, they were hearing,

not the words of men, but in truth, the word of God (1 Thess. 2:13).

Through the ministry of these messengers of old, Jehovah declared His truth to the world. Quoting the message of Moses: "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put *my words* in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him" (Deut. 18:18). And Jeremiah records the Lord as saying, "Behold, I have put *my words* in thy mouth" (Jer. 1:9). The word which these men spake and wrote was not their own; it was the word of the living God. And to Ezekiel God said, "Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with *my words* unto them" (Eze. 3:4).

Expressions such as "*Hear the word of the Lord*"; "*I heard the voice of the Lord, saying*"; "*The word of the Lord came unto me*," et cetera, occur more than 1,300 times in the prophetic writings of the Old Testament. And the New Testament writers make much the same claim. The apostle Paul says, "*I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you*" (1 Cor. 11:28). "*If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord*" (1 Cor. 14:37).

We take the Bible in its entirety, believing that it not merely *contains* the word of God, but *is* the word of God.

We believe in the authority, veracity, reliability, and truth of the Holy Scriptures. The same union of the divine and the human that is manifest in Christ, exists in the Bible. Its truths, revealed, are "given by

inspiration of God" (2 Tim. 3:16), yet are couched in the words of men.

Seventh-day Adventists hold the Protestant position that the Bible and the Bible only is the sole rule of faith and practice for Christians. We believe that all theological beliefs must be measured by the living Word, judged by its truth, and whatsoever is unable to pass this test, or is found to be out of harmony with its message, is to be rejected.

True Christianity receives the word of God as the great treasure house of inspired truth and the test of all inspiration.

—*The Great Controversy*, p. 193.

We are to receive God's word as supreme authority.—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 402.

In our time there is a wide departure from their [the Scriptures'] doctrines and precepts, and there is need of a return to the great Protestant principle—the Bible, and the Bible only, as the rule of faith and duty.—*The Great Controversy*, pp. 204, 205.

# Seventh-day Adventist

## Relationship to Past Positions

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### QUESTION 3

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*Have Seventh-day Adventists changed from some of the positions advocated by certain adherents of earlier years, from whom citations are still currently circulated? Do such citations misrepresent the present teachings of Adventist leadership?*

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Seventh-day Adventists believe that the unfolding light of Bible truth is progressive, and is to shine "more and more unto the perfect day" (Prov. 4:18). And we have sought to walk in the advancing light of truth. We have never driven in formal creedal stakes, and said, "This is the truth; thus far, and no farther." Ellen G. White, one of our leading writers, wrote in 1892:

New light will ever be revealed on the word of God to him who is in living connection with the Sun of Righteousness. Let no one come to the conclusion that there is no more truth to be revealed. The diligent, prayerful seeker for truth will find precious rays of light yet to shine forth from the word of God.—*Counsels on Sabbath School Work*, p. 34.

The founding fathers of the Seventh-day Adventist Church over a century ago came out of various denominational backgrounds. While all were premillennialists, some were Trinitarian; others were Arian. The majority were Arminians; a few were Calvinists. Some insisted on immersion; a few were content with sprinkling. There was diversity on these points. And as with various

other religious groups, our early days were characterized by transition and adjustment. A church was being brought forth. As these men were already born-again believers, the initial study and emphasis was placed upon the distinctive teachings of the movement. And they were similarly occupied in developing an effective organization.

In those early years relatively little attention was paid to the respective merits of Arminianism in contrast with the Calvinist position. The historic differences of thought involved had reached back to Augustine and Chrysostom. They did not concern themselves with "absolute decrees," "divine sovereignty," "particular election," or "limited atonement." Nor did they, at first, seek to define the nature of the Godhead, or the problems of Christology, involving the deity of Christ and His nature during the incarnation; the personality and deity of the Holy Spirit; the nature, scope, and completeness of the atonement; the relationship of law to grace or the fullness of the doctrine of righteousness by faith; and the like.

But with the passage of years the earlier diversity of view on certain doctrines gradually gave way to unity of view. Clear and sound positions were then taken by the great majority on such doctrines as the Godhead, the deity and eternal pre-existence of Christ, and the personality of the Holy Spirit. Clear-cut views were established on righteousness by faith, the true relationship of law and grace, and on the death of Christ as the complete sacrificial atonement for sin.

A few, however, held to some of their former views, and at times these ideas got into print. However, for

decades now the church has been practically at one on the basic truths of the Christian faith.

The very fact that our positions were now clarified seemed to us to be sufficient. Our teachings, we felt, were clear. And no particular statement of change from those earlier ideas appeared necessary. Today the primary emphasis of all our leading denominational literature, as well as the continuous presentation over radio and television, emphasizes the historic fundamentals of the Christian faith.

But the charges and attacks have persisted. Some continue to gather up quotations from some of our earlier literature long since out of date, and print. Certain statements are cited, often wrested out of context, which give a totally distorted picture of the beliefs and teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church of today.

Another consideration should be taken into account. It is that Seventh-day Adventists, having no formal creed, do not rigidly bind the thinking of their ministry. It would be strange indeed if from some Adventist writer there did not appear an occasional statement that was out of line with the consensus of Seventh-day Adventist belief. Most religious bodies face this problem and embarrassment from time to time.

All this has made it desirable and necessary for us to declare our position anew upon the great fundamental teachings of the Christian faith, and to deny every statement or implication that Christ, the second person of the Godhead, was not one with the Father from all eternity, and that His death on the cross was not a full and complete sacrificial atonement. The belief of Seventh-day Adventists on these great truths is clear and

emphatic. And we feel that we should not be identified with, or stigmatized for, certain limited and faulty concepts held by some, particularly in our formative years.

This statement should therefore nullify the stock "quotations" that have been circulated against us. We are one with our fellow Christians of denominational groups in the great fundamentals of the faith once delivered to the saints. Our hope is in a crucified, risen, ministering, and soon-returning Saviour.

## **II. Questions About Christ**



# Deity and Eternal Pre-existence of Christ

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## QUESTION 4

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*It is frequently charged that Seventh-day Adventists deny the actual deity and eternal pre-existence of Christ, the Eternal Word. Is this contention true? Do you believe in the Trinity? Please give the Biblical basis for your beliefs.*

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### I. Believers in Deity of Christ and Trinity

Our belief in the deity and eternal pre-existence of Christ, the second person of the Godhead, is on record in our "Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists," appearing annually in our official *Yearbook* and in our authoritative *Church Manual* (1951 ed., pp. 29-36). Moreover, those who are baptized into the Adventist Church subscribe to the "Summary of Doctrinal Beliefs" appearing on our standard Baptismal Certificate, article 2 of which reads:

Jesus Christ, the second person of the Godhead, and the eternal Son of God, is the only Saviour from sin; and man's salvation is by grace through faith in Him.

The candidate signs this statement, in affirmation of belief, before baptism. And in Appendix A, on pp. 641-645, appears a compilation of statements on the deity and eternal pre-existence of Christ and His posi-

tion in the Godhead from one of our most representative writers, Ellen G. White.

As to Christ's place in the Godhead, we believe Him to be the second person in the heavenly Trinity—comprised of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—who are united not only in the Godhead but in the provisions of redemption. A series of succinct statements on the Trinity also appears in Appendix A, "Christ's Place in the Godhead," clearly presenting (1) that Christ is one with the Eternal Father—one in nature, equal in power and authority, God in the highest sense, eternal and self-existent, with life original, unborrowed, underived; and (2) that Christ existed from all eternity, distinct from, but united with, the Father, possessing the same glory, and all the divine attributes.

Seventh-day Adventists base their belief in the Trinity on the statements of Holy Scripture rather than on a historic creed. Article 2 of the statement on Fundamental Beliefs, is explicit:

That the Godhead, or Trinity, consists of the Eternal Father, a personal, spiritual Being, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, infinite in wisdom and love; the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Eternal Father, through whom all things were created and through whom the salvation of the redeemed hosts will be accomplished; the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead, the great regenerating power in the work of redemption. Matt. 28:19.

Another representative statement appears in the "Summary of Doctrinal Beliefs" on the *Certificate of Baptism*:

1. The true and living God, the first person of the Godhead, is our heavenly Father, and He, by His Son, Christ Jesus, created all things. (Matt. 28:18, 19; 1 Cor. 8:5, 6; Eph. 3:9; Jer. 10:10-12; Heb. 1:1-3; Acts 17:22-29; Col. 1:16-18.)

## ETERNAL PRE-EXISTENCE OF CHRIST 37

2. Jesus Christ, the second person of the Godhead, and the eternal Son of God, is the only Saviour from sin; and man's salvation is by grace through faith in Him. (Matt. 28:18, 19; John 3:16; Micah 5:2; Matt. 1:21; 2:5, 6; Acts 4:12; 1 John 5:11, 12; Eph. 1:9-15; 2:4-8; Rom. 3:23-26.)

3. The Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead, is Christ's representative on earth, and leads sinners to repentance and to obedience of all God's requirements. (Matt. 28:18, 19; John 14:26; 15:26; 16:7-15; Rom. 8:1-10; Eph. 4:30.)

### II. Biblical Basis for Belief in Deity of Christ

The deity of our Lord Jesus Christ is established by at least eleven separate lines of evidence, which, taken collectively, completely establish His deity. These are:

1. **ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF THE TITLE "SON OF GOD" BY CHRIST HIMSELF.**—While here among men Christ acknowledged Himself to be the Son of God (Matt. 27:41-43; John 5:23; 9:35-37; 10:36; 17:1). He confirmed the testimony of others that He was the Son of God (Matt. 16:15-17; John 1:32-34, 48, 49; 11:27). And numerous other statements attest the fact that He was what He declared Himself to be—the Son of God (Matt. 3:16, 17; John 19:7; 20:30, 31; Acts 9:20; Rom. 1:1-4; 2 Cor. 1:19; Heb. 4:14; 2 Peter 1:16, 17).

Christ employed the title "Son of God" without the slightest reservation, and with the utmost freedom and frankness. It is the one title that embodies, in a most explicit way, His unique relationship to the Father.

2. **APPLICATION TO JESUS CHRIST OF A SCORE OF NAMES AND TITLES RESTRICTED TO DEITY.**—In the Old Testament some 70 names and titles are ascribed to Jesus Christ, and in the New Testament some 170 more. Those restricted exclusively to Deity include

“God” (John 1:1); “God with us” (Matt. 1:23); “the great God” (Titus 2:13); “God blessed for ever” (Rom. 9:5); “Son of God” (some 40 times); “only begotten Son” (five times); “the first and the last” (Rev. 1:17); “Alpha and Omega” (Rev. 22:13); “the beginning and the end” (Rev. 22:13); “Holy One” (Acts 3:14); “Lord” (used constantly); “Lord of all” (Acts 10:36); “Lord of glory” (1 Cor. 2:8); “King of glory” (Ps. 24:8-10); “Wonderful” (Isa. 9:6); “Everlasting Father” (Isa. 9:6); “Word of God” (Rev. 19:13); “Word” (John 1:1); “Emmanuel” (Matt. 1:23); “mediator” (1 Tim. 2:5); and “King of kings, and Lord of lords” (Rev. 19:16).

3. ASCIPTION TO CHRIST OF ATTRIBUTES BELONGING SOLELY TO DEITY.—These include omnipotence (Matt. 28:18), omniscience (Matt. 9:4), omnipresence (Matt. 18:20), immutability (Heb. 13:8)—appearing in scores of texts.

4. ASCIPTION TO CHRIST OF OFFICES AND PREROGATIVES POSSESSED AND EXERCISED ONLY BY DEITY.—These embrace creation of the universe (John 1:1-3); preservation of the universe (Heb. 1:3); right and power to forgive sins (Mark 2:5-12); right and power to judge all men (Acts 17:31); authority and power to raise the dead (John 5:28, 29); to transform our bodies (Phil. 3:21); to bestow immortality (1 Cor. 15:52, 53).

5. APPLICATION OF THE “I AM” OF THE OLD TESTAMENT TO JESUS CHRIST IN THE NEW.—When Christ told the Jews, “Before Abraham was, I am,” (John 8:58), He was claiming deity, and His hearers

recognized the implications of His words, for they took up "stones to cast at him"—the Jewish punishment for high-handed blasphemy. He obviously used the words of God in the Old Testament, "I AM THAT I AM" (Ex. 3:14), long recognized as the symbol of deity, applying to Himself the attribute of self-existence.

6. IDENTIFICATION OF JEHOVAH OF THE OLD TESTAMENT WITH JESUS IN THE NEW.—There are a number of Old Testament texts containing the name Jehovah that have been applied by New Testament writers to Jesus Christ.

The word "Lord" (*Yahweh*) in Psalm 102:22, and the related verses 25-28, is applied to Jesus in Hebrews 1:10-12. The same divine name (*Yahweh*) appears also in Habakkuk 2:2, 3, and is applied to Christ in Hebrews 10:37.

Three other instances where either *Yahweh* or *Elohim* are applied to our Lord can be seen in the following: In Jeremiah 31:31 *Yahweh* is used, and is referred to the work of Christ in Hebrews, chapters 8 and 10. The reference to *Yahweh* in Haggai 2:6 is also Messianic, and is applied to the work of Jesus in Hebrews 12:26. The divine name *Elohim* in Psalm 45:6, 7, is applied to the Son of God in Hebrews 1:8, 9.

7. NAME OF THE SON COUPLED, IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, IN FULL EQUALITY\* WITH THE FATHER.—This

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\*Christ's equality with God the Father is demonstrated in many different ways in the New Testament.

1. To honor the Son is to honor the Father (John 5:23).
2. To see Christ is to see God (John 14:7-9).
3. To know Christ is to know the Father (John 14:7).
4. To believe in Jesus is to believe in God (John 12:44).
5. Christ does the same things as does the Father (John 5:19).
6. Christ raises the dead as does the Father (John 5:21).
7. Christ has life in Himself as does the Father (John 5:26).

appears in the apostolic benediction (2 Cor. 13:14); the baptismal formula (Matt. 28:19); and in other texts where their names are united.

**8. DECLARED SINLESSNESS OF JESUS CHRIST THROUGHOUT HIS LIFE AMONG MEN.**—This was clearly foretold in the Old Testament (Ps. 45:7; Isa. 53:9; Jer. 23:5; Zech. 9:9). And it was expressly declared in the New Testament—as the “Holy One of God” (Mark 1:24), “holy thing” (Luke 1:35), “holy child Jesus” (Acts 4:27), “hath done nothing amiss” (Luke 23:41), “no unrighteousness . . . in him” (John 7:18), “Holy One and the Just” (Acts 3:14), “knew no sin” (2 Cor. 5:21), “without spot” (1 Peter 1:19), “without blemish” (1 Peter 1:19), “did no sin” (1 Peter 2:22), “separate from sinners” (Heb. 7:26).

**9. DIVINE WORSHIP AND PRAYER TO JESUS, WHICH IS DUE ONLY TO GOD.**—There were many instances where Jesus Christ, as God and Creator, without hesitation accepted worship which even angels as well as good men, as creatures, declined with fear and horror (Rev. 19:10; Acts 10:25, 26). The prerogative of deity was assumed and asserted throughout Jesus’ New Testament life in a score of instances (Matt. 14:33; 28:9, 17).

**10. THE AWARENESS OF CHRIST CONCERNING HIS DIVINE PERSON AND MISSION.**—At twelve He recognized God as His Father (Luke 2:41-52); at thirty this awareness of His divine mission was revealed at His baptism (Matt. 3:13-17); it appears in the record of the temptation (Matt. 4:1-11); in the calling of the twelve and the seventy; in claims of the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5 to 7).

11. CONVERGENCE OF MULTIPLE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETIC SPECIFICATIONS AS FULFILLED IN JESUS CHRIST, CONSTITUTES THE CULMINATING EVIDENCE.—Quite a number of separate, specific, and minute predictions pinpoint Him as the One who was to come from God (such as Isa. 7:14; 9:6).

# Deity of Christ and Church Membership

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## QUESTION 5

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*If a Unitarian or an Arian (rejecting the trinity of the Godhead, and denying the deity of Christ) should seek admission into your church, would a Seventh-day Adventist minister baptize and receive such into membership?*

*Is it possible for an individual to remain in good and regular standing if he consistently refuses to submit to church authority regarding the historic doctrine of the deity of Jesus Christ?*

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While the first question seemingly touches upon a highly important problem, it is nevertheless hypothetical—for the simple reason that an avowed Unitarian or Arian does not seek membership in an avowedly Trinitarian church while still holding his old views on the Godhead. A poll of numerous ministers of long experience connected with our denominational headquarters shows that no minister in this large group has ever been faced with such a request.

Seventh-day Adventist ministers are required thoroughly to instruct all candidates for membership preparatory to baptism. This period of instruction usually continues for some months. If a candidate persists in holding erroneous views concerning our Lord and

Saviour, who alone can save the sinner, then only one course could be followed: the applicant would have to be told frankly that he is totally unprepared for baptism, and could not be received into our fellowship. He would be counseled to study further until he understood and had fully accepted the deity of Jesus Christ and His redemptive power. We could not permit one who denies what we believe, and believes what we deny, to become a member, for we could never dwell together in harmony. Strife and disintegration would result.

Furthermore, the Seventh-day Adventist Church uses a uniform four-page *Certificate of Baptism*, which is given the candidate at the time of his baptism. On pages 2 and 3 appears a "Summary of Doctrinal Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists." Following article 1, which deals with the Trinity, the second article reads:

2. Jesus Christ, the second person of the Godhead, and the eternal Son of God, is the only Saviour from sin; and man's salvation is by grace through faith in Him. (Matt. 28:18, 19; John 3:16; Micah 5:2; Matt. 1:21; 2:5, 6; Acts 4:12; 1 John 5:11, 12; Eph. 1:9-15; 2:4-8; Rom. 3:23-26.)

Then on page 4 is found the candidate's "Baptismal Vow," with thirteen terse declarations to be made in the affirmative before baptism is administered, following which the certificate is signed and dated. The first of these affirmations pertains to our belief in God the Father, God the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The next in the list of questions to be answered, reads:

2. Do you accept the death of Jesus Christ on Calvary as an atoning sacrifice for the sins of men, and believe that through faith in His shed blood men are saved from sin and its penalty?

This is the procedure preparatory to baptism into

the Adventist faith. That this Baptismal Certificate is authoritative, and in constant use in the church, is seen from its inclusion in our official *Church Manual*. It would, therefore, seem that there is less likelihood of one who holds Arian or Unitarian positions entering the Seventh-day Adventist Church than of his entering some other Protestant communion.

The second question, like the first, is largely hypothetical. Our position can be seen in the official instruction for the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the *Church Manual*, covering the duties, responsibilities, and procedures in church relationships. This book was approved and issued by the General Conference in regular session. Concerning the authority and responsibility of the church in such matters, we read on pages 218 and 219 (1951 ed.):

“The world’s Redeemer has invested great power with His church. He states the rules to be applied in cases of trial with its members. . . . God holds His people, as a body, responsible for the sins existing in individuals among them. If the leaders of the church neglect to diligently search out the sins which bring the displeasure of God upon the body, they become responsible for these sins. . . . If wrongs are apparent among His people, and if the servants of God pass on indifferent to them, they virtually sustain and justify the sinner, and are alike guilty, and will just as surely receive the displeasure of God; for they will be made responsible for the sins of the guilty.”

On page 224, under the heading “Reasons for Which Members Shall Be Disciplined,” there are listed seven definite departures, any one of which could be grounds for disfellowshiping a member. The first reads:

1. Denial of faith in the fundamentals of the gospel and in the cardinal doctrines of the church or teaching doctrines contrary to the same.

These "fundamentals of the gospel," or "fundamental beliefs," twenty-two in number, are found on pages 29-36 of the *Church Manual*. The second and third of these fundamentals deal with the doctrine of God, emphasizing our belief in the Trinity, the omnipotence, omniscience, and eternal existence of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We quote:

2. That the Godhead, or Trinity, consists of the Eternal Father, a personal, spiritual Being, omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, infinite in wisdom and love; the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Eternal Father, through whom all things were created and through whom the salvation of the redeemed hosts will be accomplished; the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead, the great regenerating power in the work of redemption. (Matt. 28:19.)

3. That Jesus Christ is very God, being of the same nature and essence as the Eternal Father. While retaining His divine nature, He took upon Himself the nature of the human family, lived on earth as a man, exemplified in His life as our example the principles of righteousness, attested His relationship to God by many mighty miracles, died for our sins on the cross, was raised from the dead, and ascended to the Father, where He ever lives to make intercession for us. (John 1:1, 14; Heb. 2:9-18; 8:1, 2; 4:14-16; 7:25.)

The fourth of these "fundamental beliefs" stresses the nature of our salvation:

4. That every person, in order to obtain salvation, must experience the new birth. This comprises an entire transformation of life and character by the re-creative power of God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. (John 3:16; Matt. 18:3; Acts 2:37-39.)

Salvation, then, comes about solely through "faith in the Lord Jesus Christ." One who refuses to recognize the deity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ can, therefore, neither understand nor experience that divine re-creative power in its fullness. Not only is he dis-

qualified for membership by his very unbelief, but he is already outside the mystic body of Christ, the church. And there would be nothing else for the church to do but to recognize this separation through unbelief, and to act in harmony with the instruction already referred to in the *Church Manual*. Section 5 of the reasons given for disfellowshiping a member reads:

Persistent refusal to recognize properly constituted church authority or to submit to the order and discipline of the church.

Although the authority of the church to act in such a case is recognized, disfellowshiping a member is never entered into hurriedly, but only after much counsel, prayer, and effort to reclaim the erring one. Usually, in actual practice, either the person who loses faith in the fundamentals of the gospel finds himself so out of harmony with his brethren that he withdraws voluntarily, or his conduct is such that the church must take action in his case.

The historic doctrine of the deity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is a cardinal belief of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

### **The Historic Basis for a Misunderstanding**

Seventh-day Adventists have often been misunderstood relative to their belief concerning the deity of Christ and the nature of the Godhead. The basis for this misunderstanding lies somewhat in matters of definition and historical background.

In the interdenominational Millerite movement to which the early Seventh-day Adventists had belonged, a few of the leaders were members of a denomination known as "Christians." This group had sounded their

no-creed, Bible-and-Bible-only rallying cry in the early nineteenth century Arminian revolt against the dominant ecclesiastico-political New England Calvinism, in which assent to the Westminster Confession of Faith was a *sine qua non*. In their zeal to reject everything not found in the Bible, the "Christians" were betrayed by overliteralism into interpreting the Godhead in terms of the human relationships suggested by the words "Son," "Father," and "begotten," that is, into a tendency to disparage the non-Biblical word "Trinity" and to contend that the Son must have had a beginning in the remote past. (However, these people, in spite of being called Arian, were at the opposite pole from the liberal, humanistic Arians who became Unitarians, and whose view of Christ represented Him to be a mere man.)

Some of these "Christians," committed to the Bible as their guide and making Christian character rather than belief the only test of church membership, were inclined to give a sympathetic hearing to the revivalist preaching of William Miller in the 1840's and to welcome the Millerites when other churches closed their doors to them. However, in the Millerite movement speculation on the nature of the Godhead played no important part.

The earliest Seventh-day Adventists had been Millerites, coming from various denominations, and among them were two "Christian" preachers, and possibly several lay members as well. Their proportion in our early membership is unknown, and their dwindling descendants have not molded the thinking of our membership, nor did their understanding of the Godhead

become a part of our essential message to the world. Today probably only a minute portion of our membership has ever even heard of any dispute as to whether Christ once had a beginning in the unmeasured aeons of the past. And even the few so-called "Arians" among us—though erring in their theoretical theology of the nature of the relationships of the Godhead—have been as free as their more orthodox brethren of any thought of detracting from the glory and divine lordship of Jesus as Creator, Redeemer, Saviour, and Advocate.

Our people have always believed in the deity and pre-existence of Christ, most of them quite likely unaware of any dispute as to the exact relationships of the Godhead. Nor has our public preaching discussed Christology, but has placed the emphasis on the distinctive message of the Lord's coming. However, we have statements from Ellen G. White, at least from the 1870's and 1880's, on the deity of Christ, and on His oneness and equality with God; and from about 1890 on she expressed herself with increasing frequency and positiveness in an endeavor to correct certain erroneous opinions held by some—such as the literalistic notion that Christ as the "only *begotten*" Son had, in the remote ages past, had a beginning.

Why did she not make her stronger emphasis from the beginning? Doubtless for the same reason that she advised *against* pursuing theological controversy with respected but mistaken brethren—for the sake of unity on the main features of the message of the imminent return of Christ, which they all felt called of God to proclaim to the world. Her advice was, in substance:

No matter how right you are, do not stir up the subject at the present time because it will cause disunity.

Quite possibly our toleration of a few variant theories has not been too high a price to pay for freedom from creedal dogmatism and controversy, and for unity of spirit and effort in our world task.

# *The Incarnation and the “Son of Man”*

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## **QUESTION 6**

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*What do Adventists understand by Christ's use of the title “Son of man”? And what do you consider to have been the basic purpose of the incarnation?*

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The Inspired Word and the Incarnate Word, or the Word made flesh, are twin pillars in the faith of Seventh-day Adventists, in common with all true Christians. Our entire hope of salvation rests on these two immutable provisions of God. Indeed, we consider the incarnation of Christ to be the most stupendous fact, in itself and its consequences, in the history of man, and the key to all the redemptive provisions of God. Everything before the incarnation led up to it; and all that follows after grows out of it. It undergirds the whole of the gospel, and is absolutely essential to the Christian faith. This union of the Godhead with humanity—of the Infinite with the finite, the Creator with the creature, in order that Divinity might be revealed in humanity—passes our human comprehension. Christ united heaven and earth, God and man, in His own Person through this provision.

Furthermore, at His incarnation Christ *became* what He *was not* before. He took upon Himself a human

bodily form, and accepted the limitations of human bodily life, as the mode of existence while on earth among men. Thus Deity was wedded to humanity in one Person, as He became the one and only God-man. This is basic in our faith. The vicarious atoning death of Christ on the cross was the inevitable outgrowth of this primary provision.

Again, when Christ identified Himself with the human race, through the incarnation, the eternal Word of God entered into the earthly relationships of time. But from thenceforth, ever since the Son of God became man, He has not ceased to be man. He adopted human nature, and when He returned to His Father, He not only carried with Him the humanity which He had assumed at the incarnation, but He retained His perfect human nature forever—thenceforth eternally identifying Himself with the race He had redeemed. This has been well expressed by one of our most prominent writers, Ellen G. White: “In taking our nature, the Saviour has bound Himself to humanity by a tie that is never to be broken. Through the eternal ages He is linked with us.”—*The Desire of Ages* (1940), p. 25.

### I. The Son of God Becomes the Son of Man

Through the incarnation, the majesty and glory of the Eternal Word, the Creator and Lord of the universe (John 1:1-3), was veiled. And it was then that the Son of God became the Son of man—a term used more than eighty times in the New Testament. Taking humanity upon Himself, He became one with the human race that He might reveal the fatherhood of God to sinful man, and that He might redeem lost mankind.

At His incarnation He became flesh. He hungered and thirsted and was weary. He needed food and rest and was refreshed by sleep. He shared the lot of man, craving human sympathy and needing divine assistance. Nevertheless, He ever remained the blameless Son of God.

He sojourned on earth, was tempted and tried, and was touched with the feelings of our human infirmities, yet He lived a life wholly free from sin. His was a real and genuine humanity, one that must pass through the various stages of growth, like any other member of the race. He was subject to Joseph and Mary, and was a worshiper in the synagogue and Temple. He wept over the guilty city of Jerusalem, and at the grave of a loved one. He expressed His dependence upon God by prayer. Yet all the while He retained His deity—the one and only God-man. He was the second Adam, coming in the “likeness” of sinful human flesh (Rom. 8:3), but without a taint of its sinful propensities and passions. (See also Appendix B.)

The first time the title “Son of man” appears in the New Testament it is applied to Jesus as a homeless wanderer, without a place to lay His head (Matt. 8:20); the last time as a glorified, returning King (Rev. 14:14). It was as the Son of man that He came to save the lost (Luke 19:10). As Son of man He claimed authority to forgive sins (Matt. 9:1-8). As Son of man He sowed the seed of truth (Matt. 13:37), was betrayed (Matt. 17:22; Luke 22:48), was crucified (Matt. 26:2), rose from the dead (Mark 9:9), and ascended to heaven (John 6:62).

It is likewise as Son of man that He is now in

heaven (Acts 7:56) and watches over His church on earth (Rev. 1:12, 13, 20). Moreover, it is as the Son of man that He will return in the clouds of heaven (Matt. 24:30; 25:31). And as Son of man He will execute judgment (John 5:27) and receive His kingdom (Dan. 7:13, 14). That is the inspired record of His role as Son of man.

## II. Miraculous Union of the Divine and the Human

Christ Jesus our Lord was a miraculous union of the divine nature with our human nature. He was the Son of man while here in the flesh, but He was also the Son of God. The mystery of the Incarnation is expressed clearly and definitely in the Holy Scriptures.

“Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh” (1 Tim. 3:16). “God was in Christ” (2 Cor. 5:19). “The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us” (John 1:14).

What a wonderful truth! This has been referred to by Ellen G. White as follows:

He clothed His divinity with humanity. He was all the while as God, but He did not appear as God. He veiled the demonstrations of Deity which had commanded the homage, and called forth the admiration, of the universe of God. He was God while upon earth, but He divested Himself of the form of God, and in its stead took the form and fashion of a man. He walked the earth as a man. For our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich. He laid aside His glory and His majesty. He was God, but the glories of the form of God He for a while relinquished.—*The Review and Herald*, July 5, 1887.

The more we think about Christ’s becoming a babe here on earth, the more wonderful it appears. How can it be that the helpless babe in Bethlehem’s manger is still the divine Son of God? Though we cannot understand it, we can believe that He who made the worlds, for our sakes became a helpless babe.

Though higher than any of the angels, though as great as the Father on the throne of heaven, He became one with us. In Him God and man became one, and it is in this fact that we find the hope of our fallen race. Looking upon Christ in the flesh, we look upon God in humanity, and see in Him the brightness of divine glory, the express image of God the Father.—*The Youth's Instructor*, Nov. 21, 1895. ’

The Creator of worlds, He in whom was the fulness of the Godhead bodily, was manifest in the helpless babe in the manger. Far higher than any of the angels, equal with the Father in dignity and glory, and yet wearing the garb of humanity! Divinity and humanity were mysteriously combined, and man and God became one. It is in this union that we find the hope of our fallen race. Looking upon Christ in humanity, we look upon God, and see in Him the brightness of His glory, the express image of His person.—*Signs of the Times*, July 30, 1896.

In both His natures, the divine, and the human, He was perfect; He was sinless. That this was true of His divine nature there can be no question. That it was so of His humanity is also true. In His challenge to the Pharisees of His day, He said, “Which of you convinceth me of sin?” (John 8:46). The apostle to the Gentiles declared that He “knew no sin” (2 Cor. 5:21); that He was “holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners” (Heb. 7:26). Peter could testify that He “did no sin” (1 Peter 2:22); and John the beloved assures us that “in Him is no sin” (1 John 3:5). But not only did His friends emphasize the sinlessness of His nature; His enemies also declared it. Pilate was forced to confess that he found “no fault” in Him (Luke 23:14). Pilate’s wife warned her husband to have “nothing to do with that just man” (Matt. 27:19). Even the devils were compelled to acknowledge His Sonship and hence His deity. When commanded to come out of the man they had possessed, they retorted, “What have we to do with thee, Jesus,

thou Son of God" (Matt. 8:29). Mark's gospel gives "the Holy One of God" (Mark 1:24).

Ellen G. White has written:

He took "the nature, but not the sinfulness of man."

—*Signs of the Times*, May 29, 1901.

"We should have no misgivings in regard to the perfect sinlessness of the human nature of Christ."—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1131.

Why did Christ take human nature? This has been well expressed as follows:

Laying aside His royal robe and kingly crown, Christ clothed His divinity with humanity, that human beings might be raised from their degradation, and placed on vantage-ground. Christ could not have come to this earth with the glory that He had in the heavenly courts. Sinful human beings could not have borne the sight. He veiled His divinity with the garb of humanity, *but He did not part with His divinity*. A divine-human Saviour, *He came to stand at the head of the fallen race*, to share in their experience from childhood to manhood. That human beings might be partakers of the divine nature, He came to this earth, and lived a life of perfect obedience.—ELLEN G. WHITE in *The Review and Herald*, June 15, 1905. (Italics supplied.)

Christ took upon Himself humanity, that He might reach humanity. . . . It required both the divine and the human to bring salvation to the world.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 296.

Taking humanity upon Him, Christ came to be one with humanity and at the same time to reveal our heavenly Father to sinful human beings. He was in all things made like unto His brethren. He became flesh, even as we are. He was hungry and thirsty and weary. He was sustained by food and refreshed by sleep. He shared the lot of man, and yet He was the blameless Son of God. He was a stranger and sojourner on the earth—in the world, but not of the world; tempted and tried as men and women today are tempted and tried, yet living a life free from sin.—*Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 286.

We emphasize again that in His human nature Christ was perfect and sinless.

In this respect, something of vital import must be considered. The Sinless One, our blessed Lord, voluntarily took upon Himself the burden and penalty of our sins. This was an act in full counsel and cooperation with God the Father.

God "laid on him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. 53:6).

"When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin . . ." (verse 10).

And yet, this was a voluntary act of our blessed Saviour, for we read:

"He shall bear their iniquities" (verse 11).

"He hath poured out his soul unto death" (verse 12).

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (1 Peter 2:24).

*As a member of the human family He was mortal, but as a God He was the fountain of life to the world. He could, in His divine person, ever have withstood the advances of death, and refused to come under its dominion; but He voluntarily laid down His life, that in so doing He might give life and bring immortality to light. . . . What humility was this! It amazed angels. The tongue can never describe it; the imagination cannot take it in. The eternal Word consented to be made flesh! God became man! It was a wonderful humility.*—ELLEN G. WHITE in *The Review and Herald*, July 5, 1887. (Italics supplied.)

Only the sinless Son of God could be our substitute. This our sinless Redeemer did; He took upon Himself the sins of the whole world, but, in doing so, there was not the slightest taint of corruption upon Him. The Holy Bible, however, does say that God "made him to be sin for us" (2 Cor. 5:21). This Pauline expression has puzzled theologians for centuries, but whatever it means, it certainly does *not* mean that our Immaculate Lord *became a sinner*. The text states that He was made

“to be sin.” Hence it must mean that He took our place, that He died in our stead, that “he was numbered with the transgressors” (Isa. 53:12), and that He took the burden and penalty that was ours.

All true Christians recognize this redemptive act of Jesus on Calvary’s cross. There is an abundance of scriptural testimony to this fact.

The writings of Ellen G. White are entirely in harmony with the Scriptures on this point.

The Son of God endured the wrath of God against sin. *All the accumulated sin of the world was laid upon the Sin-bearer*, the One who was innocent, the One who alone could be the propitiation for sin, because He Himself was obedient. He was One with God. *Not a taint of corruption was upon Him.*—*Signs of the Times*, Dec. 9, 1897. (Italics supplied.)

As one with us, He must bear the burden of our guilt and woe. The Sinless One must feel the shame of sin. The peace lover must dwell with strife, the truth must abide with falsehood, purity with vileness. *Every sin, every discord, every defiling lust* that transgression had brought, *was torture to His spirit.* . . . Upon Him who had laid off His glory and accepted the weakness of humanity the redemption of the world must rest.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 111. (Italics supplied.)

*The weight of the sins of the world was pressing His soul*, and His countenance expressed unutterable sorrow, *a depth of anguish that fallen man had never realized*. He felt the overwhelming tide of woe that deluged the world. He realized the strength of indulged appetite and of unholy passion that controlled the world.—*The Review and Herald*, Aug. 4, 1874.

Entire justice was done in the atonement. In the place of the sinner, *the spotless Son of God received the penalty*, and the sinner goes free as long as he receives and holds Christ as his personal Saviour. Though guilty, he is looked upon as innocent. Christ fulfilled every requirement demanded by justice.—*The Youth’s Instructor*, April 25, 1901. (Italics supplied.)

Guiltless, *He bore the punishment of the guilty. Innocent, yet offering Himself as a substitute for the transgressor. The guilt of every sin pressed its weight upon the divine soul of the*

world's Redeemer.—*Signs of the Times*, Dec. 5, 1892. (Italics supplied.)

All this He bore vicariously. He took it upon His sinless soul and bore it on the cruel cross.

There is another aspect of this question which needs to be emphasized, and that is, that Jesus not only took and bore the "iniquities of us all," He took and bore something else, something, however, which was intimately associated with our sins.

"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows" (Isa. 53:4). "A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief" (verse 3).

Matthew refers to this passage:

"Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses" (Matt. 8:17).

The Weymouth translation reads:

"He took on Him our weaknesses, and bore the burden of our diseases."

And the Twentieth Century gives:

"He took our infirmities on himself, and bore the burden of our diseases."

As He bore (Gr. *pherō*—LXX) our iniquities (Isa. 53:11) so He bore (Gr. *anapherō*) our weaknesses (Matt. 8:17, Weymouth).

But let us observe further what is implied in this. Notice the words used to express the thought, both in Isaiah 53 and Matthew 8. He bore our *griefs*, our *sorrows*, our *infirmities*, our *sicknesses*. The original words are also translated *pains*, *diseases*, and *weaknesses*.

On this note the following in the writings of Ellen G. White:

He was subject to the infirmities and weaknesses by which

man is encompassed, "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." He was touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and was in all points tempted like as we are. And yet *He "knew no sin."* He was the Lamb "without blemish and without spot." . . . We should have *no misgivings in regard to the perfect sinlessness of the human nature of Christ.*—*Signs of the Times*, June 9, 1898. (Italics supplied.)

He was *unsullied with corruption, a stranger to sin*; yet He prayed, and that often with strong crying and tears. He prayed for His disciples and for Himself, thus *identifying Himself with our needs, our weaknesses, and our failings*, which are so common with humanity. He was a mighty petitioner, *not possessing the passions of our human, fallen natures*, but compassed with like infirmities, tempted in all points even as we are, Jesus endured agony which required help and support from His Father.—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 508. (Italics supplied.)

He is a *brother in our infirmities, but not in possessing like passions. As the sinless One, His nature recoiled from evil.* He endured struggles and torture of soul in a world of sin. His humanity made prayer a necessity and privilege. He required all the stronger divine support and comfort which His Father was ready to impart to Him, to Him who had, for the benefit of man, left the joys of heaven and chosen His home in a cold and thankless world.—*Ibid.*, p. 202. (Italics supplied.)

It could hardly be construed, however, from the record of either Isaiah or Matthew, that Jesus was diseased or that He experienced the frailties to which our fallen human nature is heir. But He did *bear* all this. Could it not be that He bore this *vicariously* also, just as He bore the sins of the whole world?

These weaknesses, frailties, infirmities, failings are things which we, with our sinful, fallen natures, have to bear. To us they are natural, inherent, but when He bore them, He took them not as something innately His, but He bore them as our substitute. He bore them in His perfect, sinless nature. Again we remark, Christ

bore all this vicariously, just as vicariously He bore the iniquities of us all.

It is in this sense that all should understand the writings of Ellen G. White when she refers occasionally to sinful, fallen, and deteriorated human nature. We read that Jesus took "our nature" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 25); He "took upon Himself human nature" (*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1128); He "took the nature of man" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 117); He took "our sinful nature" (*Medical Ministry*, p. 181); He took "our fallen nature" (*Special Instruction Relating to the Review and Herald Office*, p. 13, May 26, 1896); He took "man's nature in its fallen condition" (*Signs of the Times*, June 9, 1898).

All these are forceful, cogent statements, but surely no one would designedly attach a meaning to them which runs counter to what the same writer has given in other places in her works. Notice the setting in which these expressions are used.

He took "the nature but not the sinfulness of man."  
—*Signs of the Times*, May 29, 1901.

He took "man's nature in its fallen condition," but "Christ did not in the least participate in its sin."—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1131.

"He is a brother in our infirmities, but not in possessing like passions."—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 202.

In "identifying Himself with our needs, our weaknesses, and our feelings, . . . He was a mighty petitioner, *not possessing the passions of our human, fallen natures.*"—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, pp. 508, 509. (Italics supplied.)

"We should have no misgivings in regard to *the per-*

*fect sinlessness of the human nature of Christ.”—The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 5, p. 1131. (Italics supplied.)*

The Son of God “became like one of us, *except in sin.*”—*The Youth’s Instructor*, Oct. 20, 1886. (Italics supplied.)

“*Not a taint of corruption was upon Him.*”—*Signs of the Times*, Dec. 9, 1897. (Italics supplied.)

It will be noted in the statements quoted above that while the writer mentions that Jesus *took* our nature, He Himself was not sinful, but sinless.

Whatever Jesus took was not His intrinsically or innately. His taking the burden of our inherited weakness and failings, even after four thousand years of accumulated infirmities and degeneracy (*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 49, 117), did not in the slightest degree taint His human nature. “He took upon His sinless nature our sinful nature.”—*Medical Ministry*, p. 181. “We should have no misgivings in regard to the perfect sinlessness of the human nature of Christ.”—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1131.

“He voluntarily assumed human nature. It was His own act, and by His own consent.”—*The Review and Herald*, July 5, 1887.

He voluntarily subjected “Himself to all the humbling conditions of man’s nature” (*Testimonies*, vol. 4, p. 458), and “took upon him the form of a servant” (Phil. 2:7); He “took on him the seed of Abraham” (Heb. 2:16), that He was made “to be sin for us” (2 Cor. 5:21), and that He was made in all things “like unto his brethren” (Heb. 2:17).

All that Jesus took, all that He *bore*, whether the

burden and penalty of our iniquities, or the diseases and frailties of our human nature—all was taken and borne *vicariously*. Just as bearing *vicariously* the sins of the whole world did not taint His perfect, sinless soul, neither did bearing the diseases and frailties of our fallen nature taint Him in the slightest degree with the corrupting influences of sin.

Let us ever remember that our blessed Lord was sinless. "We should have no misgivings in regard to the perfect sinlessness of the human nature of Christ."

—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1131.

In treating upon the humanity of Christ, you need to guard strenuously every assertion, lest your words be taken to mean more than they imply, and thus you lose or dim the clear perceptions of His humanity as combined with divinity. His birth was a miracle of God. . . . "That holy thing which shall be born of thee [Mary] shall be called the Son of God." . . . Never, in any way, leave the slightest impression upon human minds that a taint of, or inclination to, corruption rested upon Christ, or that He in any way yielded to corruption. He was tempted in all points like as man is tempted, yet He is called "that holy thing." It is a mystery that is left unexplained to mortals that Christ could be tempted in all points like as we are, and yet be without sin. The incarnation of Christ has ever been, and will ever remain, a mystery. That which is revealed, is for us and for our children, but let every human being be warned from the ground of making Christ altogether human, such an one as ourselves; for it cannot be.—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, pp. 1128, 1129.

What a wonderful Saviour is Jesus our Lord!

### III. Could Christ Have Sinned?

On this aspect of this vital question there is diversity of opinion in the Christian church at large. Some feel that it was impossible for Jesus to sin; others that it was possible. We join with the latter in our understanding

of this matter and, as in many other phases of Christian doctrine, eminent scholars in the church through the centuries have expressed themselves much as we do. Our position on this is well expressed by Ellen G. White:

Many claim that it was impossible for Christ to be overcome by temptation. Then He could not have been placed in Adam's position; He could not have gained the victory that Adam failed to gain. If we have in any sense a more trying conflict than had Christ, then He would not be able to succor us. But our Saviour *took humanity, with all its liabilities*. He *took the nature of man, with the possibility of yielding to temptation*. We have nothing to bear which He has not endured. . . . In man's behalf, Christ conquered by enduring the severest test.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 117. (Italics supplied.)

That revered and honored theologians in the past have held the same view is evident. Note the following:

Had He been endowed from the start with *absolute* impeccability, or with the impossibility of sinning, He could not be a true man, nor our model for imitation: His holiness, instead of being His own self-acquired act and inherent merit, would be an accidental or outward gift, and His temptation an unreal show. As a true man, Christ must have been a free and responsible moral agent: freedom implies the power of choice between good and evil, and the power of disobedience as well as obedience to the law of God.—PHILIP SCHAFF, *The Person of Christ*, pp. 35, 36.

If the truth . . . —viz., that the force of temptation was strong enough to create the consciousness of a struggle—be overlooked, then the whole curriculum of moral trial through which Jesus passed on earth degenerates at once into a mere stage performance. . . . In modern times this doketic view finds no acceptance; theologians of all schools being agreed that the forces of evil, with which the Son of Man fought so noble a fight, were not shadows, but substantial and formidable foes.—ALEXANDER B. BRUCE, D.D., *The Humiliation of Christ*, p. 268.

Whenever we attribute, in a proper manner and in the sense of Scripture, all the moral elements of man to Jesus, we are not to disjoin from them the freedom which is the power of choosing between good and evil; and for this very reason we are to admit it as conceivable, that he might at some time have been influ-

enced to a departure from the will of God. Unless this be supposed, the history of the temptation, however it may be explained, would have no significancy; and the expression in the Epistle to the Hebrews "he was tempted in all points as we" would be without meaning.

As Jesus was a complete man, this susceptibility and this possibility must be supposed to coexist in Him. Did they not thus coexist, he would cease to be an example of perfect human mortality.—KARL ULLMANN, *An Apologetic View of the Sinless Character of Jesus* (1841), p. 11.

We must not understand by the term [sinlessness of Jesus] an absolute impossibility of sinning but only the actual fact of not sinning, and, what is in a rational and free nature inseparable from this fact, the highest moral perfection and holiness.—*Ibid.*, p. 13.

#### IV. The Purpose of the Incarnation

As to the purpose of the incarnation, the answer appears in the texts supporting the following six points, which summarize the reasons for His coming to earth in human form.

1. **HE CAME TO REVEAL GOD TO THE WORLD.**—See John 1:14, 18; 3:1-36; 17:6, 26; 1 John 1:2; 4:9.

2. **HE CAME TO BRING GOD AND MAN TOGETHER.**—See John 1:51 (compare Gen. 28:12); Matt. 1:23; 1 Peter 3:18.

3. **HE CAME TO IDENTIFY HIMSELF WITH MAN BY NAME.**—He is called "Son of man" some seventy-seven times in the Gospels, such as in Luke 19:10.

4. **HE CAME TO BEAR THE SINS OF MANKIND.**—See Isa. 53:6, 11; John 1:29, margin; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 John 3:5.

5. **HE CAME TO DIE IN OUR STEAD.**—See Isa. 53:5-10; Matt. 26:28; Acts 20:28; Rom. 4:25; 5:6-10; 1 Cor. 15:3; Gal. 1:4; 1 Tim. 2:6; Heb. 2:9; 1 Peter 1:18, 19; 2:24; 3:18.

## 6. HE CAME TO DESTROY THE DEVIL AND HIS WORKS. —See John 12:31; 16:33; Heb. 2:14; 1 John 3:8.

### V. An Unfathomable Mystery

In considering a subject of such transcendent and vital importance as the incarnation of Christ, we must ever remember that there are many aspects of it that we can never fathom. Even when we catch a glimpse of the truth, human language seems altogether inadequate to express the wonders and the beauties of the matchless and inimitable mystery of the incarnation of Jesus Christ. Ellen G. White has written:

In contemplating the incarnation of Christ in humanity, we stand baffled before an unfathomable mystery, that the human mind can not comprehend. The more we reflect upon it, the more amazing does it appear.—*Signs of the Times*, July 30, 1896.

Even though this is true, there are, thank God, some phases of the truth that have been revealed. And what has been made known in the Word of God is for us to study. The same author has written the following on this point:

When we want a deep problem to study, let us fix our minds on the most marvelous thing that ever took place in earth or heaven—the incarnation of the Son of God.—Manuscript 76, 1903.

# The Bodily Resurrection of Christ

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## QUESTION 7

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*What is the Seventh-day Adventist position regarding the physical, or bodily, resurrection of Christ?*

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Seventh-day Adventists believe in the physical, or bodily, resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead as verily as they believe in His atoning death on Calvary. This is a cardinal doctrine of the Christian faith, for Christianity rests upon the indisputable fact that Christ rose from the dead (1 Cor. 15:17).

The resurrection of Christ is not to be understood merely in a spiritual sense. He actually rose from the dead. He who came from the tomb was the *same* Jesus who lived here in the flesh. He came forth in a glorified body, but it was real—so real that the women who went to the sepulcher, as well as the disciples, saw Him (Matt. 28:17; Mark 16:9, 12, 14). The two disciples on the way to Emmaus talked with Him (Luke 24). He Himself said to the disciples, “Behold my hands and my feet” (Luke 24:39). He had “flesh and bones” (verse 39). He ate with them (verse 43).

Thomas had reason to know it was the same Jesus, for he was invited to “reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust

it into my side" (John 20:27). Yes, it was the Saviour Himself. It was not a spirit, not a ghost. It was the real divine Son of God who came forth from the grave.

The resurrection of Jesus our Lord was a vital part of the message of the early church. When the apostles preached, they preached of Christ the Messiah, who was raised from the dead. "They . . . preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead" (Acts 4:2); they "gave . . . witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus" (verse 33); Paul "preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection" (Acts 17:18).

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is of vital importance in God's great plan of salvation. Even the death of Jesus, sublime as it was, would have been of no avail, were it not for His resurrection from the dead. The great apostle to the Gentiles makes this clear in his ringing testimony to the living Christ. In that wonderful chapter on the resurrection, in his message to the Corinthian church, we see the vital place that this great transaction has in the purpose of God. Note what the situation would be if Christ had not been raised from the dead.

1. There would be no benefit from preaching the gospel: "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain" (1 Cor. 15:14).
2. There would be no forgiveness of sins: "And if Christ be not raised, . . . ye are yet in your sins" (verse 17).
3. There would be no purpose in believing in Jesus: "And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain" (verse 17).
4. There would be no general resurrection from

the dead: "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" (verse 12).

5. There would be no hope beyond the grave: "If Christ be not raised, . . . then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished" (verses 17, 18).

This is a message of power, for it is by the power of His resurrection that we live the Christian life, and His life is lived out in the life of the believer.

Those who are buried with Christ in baptism are represented as rising with Him in His resurrection (Rom. 6:5, 8, 11; Eph. 2:4, 5; Col. 2:12, 13). As a result of this union with Christ, a new life is imparted to the believer (Rom. 6:4; 2 Cor. 4:10, 11; Col. 3:10). The power of Christ's resurrection is thus made available to him (Eph. 1:19, 20; Phil. 3:10; Heb. 7:16).

Once we were dead in sins; now we are alive in Christ. We were crucified with Christ; now Christ lives in us (Gal. 2:20). Our personal experience of this quickening of the soul, this liberating action of the Spirit of life, is the inward witness and the supreme evidence of the reality of the resurrection.

Above all, the resurrection of our Lord is the assurance that we, too, shall be resurrected at His second coming (1 Cor. 15:20, 23).

### The Historicity of the Resurrection

Many evidences of this astonishing event were given to the early Christians. There were at least ten appearances of Jesus after His resurrection. (1) To Mary Magdalene: Mark 16:9; John 20:14-17. (2) To the women on the way to tell the disciples that Christ had

risen: Matthew 28:9. (3) To Peter: Luke 24:34. (4) To the two disciples on the road to Emmaus: Mark 16:12; Luke 24:15, 31. (5) To the assembled disciples on the evening of the resurrection day: Mark 16:14; Luke 24:36; John 20:19. (6) To the assembled disciples a week later: John 20:26-29. (7) To the disciples at the Sea of Galilee: John 21:1-22. (8) To the eleven on a mountain in Galilee, five hundred brethren being present: Matthew 28:16; Mark 16:7; 1 Corinthians 15:6. (9) To James: 1 Corinthians 15:7. (10) To the eleven disciples at the time of the ascension: Mark 16:19; Luke 24:50-52; Acts 1:4-12.

A. T. Robertson comments on the meeting with the five hundred disciples:

The strength of this witness lies in the fact that the majority (*hoi pleious*) of them were still living when Paul wrote this Epistle, . . . not over 25 years after Christ's resurrection.—*Word Pictures in the New Testament*, 1931, vol. 4, p. 188.

Besides the testimony of the apostles and the witness of the women, there is the testimony of the Jewish council (Matt. 28:11-15), and also of the Roman authorities, according to early church writers. Pilate became acquainted with the facts, and recorded them in his regular report to the emperor. Eusebius, fourth-century bishop and church historian, wrote:

And when the wonderful resurrection and ascension of our Saviour were already noised abroad, in accordance with an ancient custom which prevailed among the rulers of the provinces, of reporting to the Emperor the novel occurrences which took place in them, in order that nothing might escape him, Pontius Pilate informed Tiberius of the reports which were noised abroad through all Palestine concerning the resurrection of our Saviour Jesus Christ from the dead. He gave an account also of other wonders which he had learned of him, and how,

after his death, having risen from the dead, he was now believed by many to be a god.

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That Pilate made an official report to Tiberius is stated also by Tertullian (*Apol.* 21), and is in itself quite probable. Justin Martyr (*Apol.* I. 35 and 48) mentions certain *Acts of Pilate* as well known in his day, but the so-called *Acts of Pilate* which are still extant in various forms are spurious, and belong to a much later period. They are very fanciful and curious.

—*Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, second series, vol. 1, p. 105.

The populace must have known about it, for at the time of the resurrection there was an earthquake and many of the saints arose. These were the antitype, in part at least, of the wave sheaf that was offered in olden days. The record says: “And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many” (Matt. 27:52, 53).

Commenting on this experience, Ellen G. White has written:

As Christ arose, He brought from the grave a multitude of captives. The earthquake at His death had rent open their graves, and when He arose, they came forth with Him. . . . Now they were to be witnesses for Him who had raised them from the dead. . . . These went into the city, and appeared unto many, declaring, Christ has risen from the dead, and we be risen with Him. Thus was immortalized the sacred truth of the resurrection.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 786.

## *Christ, and Michael the Archangel*

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### **QUESTION 8**

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*It has been charged that Seventh-day Adventists hold the same belief as do the Jehovah's Witnesses concerning Michael—that Michael the archangel was Jesus Christ prior to His incarnation, and that He was a created being. Is this accusation valid? If Michael is Christ, how do you explain Jude 9?*

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We emphatically reject the idea set forth in this question, and the position held by the Jehovah's Witnesses. We do not believe that Christ is a created being. We, as a people, have not considered the identification of Michael of sufficient prominence to dwell upon it at length either in our literature or in our preaching. But we do have clear views on the subject, and are prepared to set them forth. And our views concerning Michael, it might be added, have been held by various eminent scholars through the centuries. We are therefore not alone in our understanding.

We believe that the term "Michael" is but one of the many titles applied to the Son of God, the second person of the Godhead. But such a view does not in any way conflict with our belief in His full deity and eternal pre-existence, nor does it in the least disparage His person and work.

Michael is referred to in the book of Jude as the archangel. And were it not for other Scripture references, which present Him in another relationship, one might at first conclude that He was a created being, as are the angels in general. We believe, however, that those other relationships indicate His real status, and that, in addition, He serves as supreme leader of the angelic hosts. *But His serving in that capacity does not make Him a created angel.* A number of important factors must be considered in a study of this question.

### I. Christ in Relation to Angelic Hosts

Angels are created beings (Col. 1:16), and as such are not to be worshiped (Col. 2:18; Rev. 19:10). They are God's messengers to those who shall be heirs of salvation (Heb. 1:13, 14).

But Christ has "a more excellent name" than the angels (Heb. 1:4). He has "a name which is above every name" (Phil. 2:9), above that of every angel in heaven (Eph. 1:21). The angels are subject to Him (1 Peter 3:22). They bow before Him (Phil. 2:10), and worship Him (Heb. 1:6). Angels of God refuse the worship of men (Rev. 22:8, 9).

### II. The Son of God in the Old Testament

In the Old Testament there is record of a divine Being who is called the "angel of the Lord" (Ex. 3:2), the "angel of God" (Ex. 14:19), and the "angel of his presence" (Isa. 63:9), "messenger of the covenant" (Mal. 3:1); also "an Angel" (Ex. 23:20), "mine Angel" (verse 23), and "his angel" (Dan. 3:28). Let us note certain of these references:

1. THE "ANGEL OF THE LORD."—(a) As manifested to Gideon (Judges 6:11-22). The "angel of the Lord" (verse 11) is equated with "the Lord" (verse 14); and "Gideon built an altar there unto the Lord" (verse 24). (b) As manifested to Manoah (Judges 13:3-21). Manoah's wife refers to the "angel of the Lord" (verse 3) that she had seen as "a man of God" (verse 6), and Manoah said they had "seen God" (verse 22). (c) As manifested to Joshua (Zech. 3:1-6). "The angel of the Lord" causes iniquity to pass away, and gives change of raiment, or righteousness (verse 4). This is the prerogative of Deity.

2. "THE ANGEL" WHO APPEARED TO JACOB.—This Angel (Hosea 12:4) appeared to Jacob in the form of a man (Gen. 32:24). The Angel (man) blessed Jacob (verse 29), and Jacob said, "I have seen God face to face" (verse 30). Worship of angels is not permitted (Col. 2:18; Rev. 19:10; 22:8, 9). This is an important difference between Christ and angels.

3. THE "ANGEL OF HIS PRESENCE."—This Angel "saved," "redeemed" (Isa. 63:9), hence is equated with Deity (cf. Isa. 43:11; 44:6).

4. "MINE ANGEL."—This "Angel" (Ex. 23:23) could pardon transgression, and God's "name is in him" (verse 21). As forgiveness of sin is the prerogative of God (Mark 2:7), the conclusion seems inevitable that "mine Angel" is a member of the Godhead. With this background, it is not difficult to recognize that there was with God, in ancient days, One who was known in the foregoing instances as "the angel of the Lord," or "mine Angel," and then later as "my Son" (Ps. 2:7). At the same time He was "mine anointed" (Heb., *Meshiach*).

He is also called "a child," "a son" (Isa. 9:6). And this "son" is none other than "The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (verse 6). The *Targum* on Isaiah 9:5 (Hebrew versification varies from KJV) reads: "Wonderful counsellor, Mighty God, He who lives for ever, the Anointed one [or, Messiah]."

### III. Identity of "Prince of Princes"

The expression "Prince of princes" occurs but once in the Divine Record—Daniel 8:25. In the vision seen by Daniel an opposing power "magnified himself even to the prince of the host"; in the angel's explanation to Daniel this power is said to "stand up against the Prince of princes." The "prince of the host" is equated with "the Prince of princes." Reference is obviously here made to Deity. The expression is similar to other expressions in the Word. Psalm 136:3 speaks of the "Lord of lords," Deuteronomy 10:17 of the "God of gods," and Revelation 19:16 of the "King of kings."

Doctor Slotki, in his *Commentary* on Daniel, shows the term "Prince of princes" (Dan. 8:25) to be the same as the "prince of the host" of verse 11. And in commenting on these two expressions, the *Cambridge Bible* says, "i.e. God." But this "Prince of princes," or "prince of the host," is also referred to as Michael. Daniel 10:21 tells of "Michael your prince," and Daniel 12:1 of Michael, "the great prince." But this Prince is also the Messiah, for we read of "Messiah the Prince" in Daniel 9:25. Others agree. Joseph Parker states:

Michael was known amongst the ancient Jews as the angel or prince who had special charge of the nation of Israel. The very best Jewish writers concur in teaching that the name "Michael" is the same as the title "Messiah." It is held by them that the

few passages in which he is referred to can be most satisfactorily explained on this supposition. The man speaking in the text was "a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz. His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude" (vers. 5, 6). This is the dazzling and nameless personage that has appealed to the religious imagination through all the known centuries of time. One day—not one of earth's cold, grey days, but a day of brighter cast—we shall see that Personage, and name him, and thank him for the tender veiling of a light that might have struck creation blind.—*The People's Bible*, vol. 16, p. 438.

The One unnamed in Daniel 10:5, 6—but described as having the appearance of lightning—is well known in apocalyptic vision. A similar description of Him is found in Revelation 1:13-15. Is not He who is unnamed in Daniel 10:5, 6 now named in Daniel 10:13, when He is designated as Michael?

New Testament writers also take up this thought and apply the terminology of Daniel to Jesus Christ our Lord. He is declared to be "the Prince of life" (Acts 3:15); "a Prince" and "a Saviour" (Acts 5:31); and "the prince of the kings of the earth" (Rev. 1:5).

This Prince, or Messiah, of the apocalyptic visions of ancient days, is thus equated with Michael. Hence the name Michael is, we believe, one of the titles of the Son of the living God. But Michael is called the Archangel (Jude 9) and this term, we believe, also applies to Jesus our Lord.

#### IV. The Term "Archangel"

Having given consideration to Christ as the "Angel of the Lord" and having made mention of the fact that "Michael" and "archangel" are titles of our Lord, let

us observe the significance of the first part of the term “archangel.”

“Arch” is from the Greek prefix *archi*, but related words such as *archē* and *archōn* should also be considered.

*Archē* means beginning, and can also involve the ideas of rule and authority. It is rendered in the KJV as “rule” (1 Cor. 15:24); “principality” (Eph. 1:21); and “first principles” (Heb. 5:12). *Archōn* means “prince,” “ruler.” *Archē* and *archōn* are used at times in relation to our Lord as in the term “Angel of the Lord.” *Archē* is used Messianically in Isaiah 9:6 where in the LXX (Bagster’s translation) it is rendered “government” in the expression, “whose government [*archē*] is upon his [Messiah’s] shoulder.”

In the New Testament, Jesus our Lord is called “the beginning” [*archē*] (Col. 1:18), also the “Alpha and Omega, the beginning [*archē*]” (Rev. 21:6; see also Rev. 22:13).

*Archōn* is often rendered “ruler,” “prince,” et cetera. But once in the New Testament it is used in relation to Jesus “the prince [*archōn*] of the kings of the earth” (Rev. 1:5).

*Archōn* is used on occasions Messianically, and so refers to Christ our Saviour. He is “a prince [*archōn*] and commander to the Gentiles” (Isa. 55:4, LXX, Bagster’s translation); He is the One that is “to be a ruler [*archōn*] of Israel” (Micah 5:2, LXX, Bagster’s translation).

Another Greek word with the same prefix *archi* is *archēgos*, derived from *archi* and *hēgeomai* or *agō*—“to lead,” et cetera.

*Archēgos* as found in the LXX is generally rendered by Bagster's translation as "head," "captain," "chief," "ruler," "prince," et cetera. But in the New Testament it is used only with reference to our Lord. He is referred to as *captain*—"The captain [*archēgos*] of their salvation" (Heb. 2:10); as *author*—"The author [*archēgos*] . . . of our faith" (Heb. 12:2, margin, "beginner"); as *Prince*—"A Prince [*archēgos*] and a Saviour" (Acts 5:31); and "the Prince [*archēgos*] of life" (Acts 3:15, margin, "author").

The study of the above Greek words shows that at times they have been applied to Christ our Lord; further, that *archēgos* in its use in the New Testament is in *every* instance applied to Jesus.

#### V. Christ in Relation to the Angel Hosts

In the light of the foregoing we believe that the divine Son of God, one of whose titles is "Michael the archangel," is the leader of the angelic hosts. But to us, this does not in any way whatsoever detract from His deity, any more than when He became man and took our flesh. He certainly became "the Son of man," but all the while He was on earth as man, He was at the same time God manifest in the flesh (1 Tim. 4:10). Furthermore, He is also revealed in Scripture as leader of the hosts of Israel, under the title of the "angel of Jehovah," the "angel of his presence," et cetera. But being such, did not restrict, or detract from, His deity. Why could He not, then, be considered "Captain General" (LXX)\* of the hosts of angels without equating Him with angels

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\*Joshua 5:14, Eng. tr. by Charles Thomson.

as created beings? The being who appeared to Joshua as "captain of the host of the Lord" was a divine being, whom Joshua worshiped (Joshua 5:14). Thus the hosts of the Lord are under command of a divine being worthy of worship, and whose presence makes a place holy (verse 15). This Divine Being we believe was none other than our Lord Jesus Christ.

We believe, therefore, that there is good reason for recognizing our blessed Lord as the leader of the heavenly hosts.

#### VI. Michael in Jewish Literature

In Jewish writings Michael is recognized as the Advocate in Israel, who mediated in many ways. Thus:

He prevented Isaac's being sacrificed (*Yalkut Reubeni*, section *Wayera*); wrestled with Jacob (*Targum*, Gen. 32:25); was Advocate when Israel deserved death at the Red Sea (*Exodus Rabbah*, 18:5); led Israel during the forty years in the wilderness (Abravanel to Ex. 23:20); gave Moses the tables of stone (*Apoc. Moses*, 1); instructed Moses at Sinai (*Bk. Jubilees*, i. 27, ii. 1); destroyed the army of Sennacherib\* (*Midr. Exod.* 18:5); was one of the angels who visited Abraham\* (*Yoma*, 37<sup>a</sup>; *Shebu'oth*, 35<sup>b</sup>, footnote); was Israel's guardian angel (*Yoma*, 77<sup>a</sup>); ministers in the heavenly sanctuary (*Menahoth*, 110<sup>a</sup>).

#### VII. Michael in the Setting of Jude's Epistle

Jude's epistle was written to combat a heresy that had invaded the church of that day, for false teachers were corrupting and making of none effect "the faith

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\*This statement refers to "the angel of his presence," which the *Jewish Encyclopedia* says is Michael.

which was once delivered unto the saints" (verse 3). Jude's letter was an appeal to the loyal members to break from the association of these subverters of truth. The author does not go into detail concerning this heresy, for his letter is not a systematic theology, but is rather a battle cry.

This book is small, but rich in allusions and quotations. It is apparent that the corrupt teachings against which Jude was warning the church were libertinism and antinomianism. Not only was this false philosophy basically wrong in concept, but when followed out in the life, it led to depravity and revolting immorality. Those who had introduced this subversive heresy had evidently entered the church surreptitiously, and were threatening to undermine the very structure of the temple of truth.

1. **ULTIMATE END OF REBELLION.**—The depravity of this teaching is evidenced by the writer's reference to the gross immorality of Sodom and Gomorrah, while the attitude of the teachers themselves he illustrated by the rebellion of Korah. "Woe unto them," he warns, that "have gone in the way of Cain" (verse 11). Emphasizing the ultimate end of these defamers of righteousness, he refers particularly to the destiny of the rebellious angels. These celestial beings, "which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation" (verse 6), are reserved unto judgment. They are awaiting the coming day of final punishment.

The reason Jude refers to the rebellion of the angels, and the rebellion of ancient Israel against authority, is clear. He warns the church that all who "speak evil of those things which they know not" will perish (verse

10). He speaks of these heretics as defilers of the flesh, and declares that not only did they set at naught the counsel of church authority, but they actually denied the authority of God and of our Lord Jesus Christ. Their "hard speeches" (verse 15), or railing accusations, were not only denunciations against apostolic authority, but utterances against God Himself.

2. JUDE'S REFERENCE TO MICHAEL.—It was obviously not Jude's purpose to identify Michael, except to call attention to the fact that He is the archangel. His reference to Michael is really by way of contrast. This contrast is drawn between those who brought a railing accusation, and Michael who would not do so. On the one hand he contrasts those "filthy dreamers" who "despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities" (verse 8), with Michael, the archangel, on the other hand. He, a heavenly being, even when in dispute with the prince of evil, though there was just reason for doing so, "durst not" bring a railing accusation. This is the contrast: They, mere men, so despised authority as to rail against those in high authority; whereas Michael, the archangel, would not act thus even when disputing with Satan.

The devil, the prince of evil, could rightly be said to deserve a railing accusation, but to such a thing Michael would not stoop. To say that Michael *could not*, in the sense that He did not have the power or the authority to do so, would not be true. It is not that Michael *could not*, in the sense of being restricted, but rather that He *would not* take such an attitude. *Scott's Bible* remarks:

He yet *dared* not to utter any reviling expression: not from fear of the devil; but because even in those circumstances, it

would not have been consistent with the perfection of his character.

What these carping critics dared to do, Michael would not do. They were abusive, defamatory, slanderous, even blasphemous. But Michael, even in dealing with the devil, revealed dignity and heavenly bearing. He could not descend to such a level of defamatory speech. Instead of multiplying words, He authoritatively declared, "The Lord rebuke thee" (verse 9).

The use of the expression "The Lord rebuke thee" is significant. It is found in but one other place in the Holy Scriptures—Zechariah 3:2. There the speaker is "the angel of the Lord" (verse 1); but in verse 2, it is expressly the "Lord" who speaks. Here we find the "angel of the Lord" equated with Jehovah Himself, and it is He who says to Satan, "The Lord rebuke thee."

This is a unique expression. The first Biblical use of it is by the Lord in dealing with Satan. The same expression is used in Jude. Might it not be, then, that the same Divine Being is revealed here? In Zechariah He was manifested under one of His titles, "the angel of the Lord," in Jude under another of His titles, "Michael."

Furthermore, the archangel is referred to but twice in the Sacred Scripture—1 Thessalonians 4:16 and Jude 9. Paul, writing to the Thessalonians, speaks of the "voice of the archangel" and associates that with the general resurrection of the saints; whereas in Jude, the reference specifically concerns the body of Moses.

Another reference to Michael as leader of the angelic host is seen in Revelation 12:7-10. Many scholars through the centuries have applied this to the days when

Satan rebelled, before ever our world was made. Then there was war in heaven. Michael and His angels fought against the dragon and his angels. Here is evidently the beginning of the great controversy between the forces of righteousness and of evil. In this passage Michael and Satan are placed in contrast. Who is the Michael of this apocalyptic passage? If Christ is the leader of the angel hosts, then we see here the first battle in the great conflict between Christ and Satan.

There is good reason for this concept, for we read that it was through “the power of his Christ” that “the accuser of our brethren” was cast down (Rev. 12:10). Victory for the saints is possible only through our risen Lord. It was Christ who triumphed over Satan in the original encounter. And it is through Christ that we overcome in the continuing encounters against the devil and his evil hosts.

Matthew Henry remarked on this passage:

. . . “Michael and his angels” on one side, and “the dragon and his angels” on the other. Christ, the great angel of the covenant, and his faithful followers; and Satan and all his instruments.

### VIII. Summary of the Evidence

1. Terms used concerning Christ are similar to those used of Michael: (a) *of Christ*, as “Prince of princes,” as “prince of the host,” as “Messiah the Prince,” and as the “Prince of life”; (b) *of Michael*, as “your prince,” and as the “great prince.”

2. As archangel is used of Michael, so is *archēgos* and *archōn* used of Christ. Thus: Christ is the *archēgos* —the “captain” (Heb. 2:10); the “author” (Heb. 12:2); the “Prince” (Acts 3:15).

3. The beginning of the great controversy between Christ (Michael) and Satan is seen in Revelation 12: 7-10.

4. Michael exercises the same prerogative as does Jehovah when He says to Satan, "The Lord rebuke thee."

5. Michael is equated with Christ by many Bible scholars.

From the foregoing it will be seen that our concept of Michael, as just another title for the Lord Jesus Christ, is vastly different from the views of others who teach that Michael is merely a created, angelic being, and not the Eternal Word of God. In direct contrast to such a depreciating Christology, Seventh-day Adventists hold that Jesus is "very God of very God, of the same substance as the Father"—coequal, coexistent, and coeternal with God the Father. We believe that there never was a time when Christ was not. He is God forevermore, His life being "original, unborrowed, undervived."

### Additional Notes

#### 1. CHRIST AS THE "ANGEL OF THE LORD"

*On Ex. 23:20:*

"Behold, I send a messenger before thee. Jewish commentators regard the messenger as Moses, who, no doubt, was a specially commissioned ambassador for God, and who might, therefore, well be termed God's messenger. But the expression—'He will not pardon your transgressions,' and 'My name is in him,' are too high for Moses. An angel must be intended—probably 'the Angel of the Covenant,'—whom the best expositors identify with the Second Person of the Trinity, the Ever-Blessed Son of God.—George Rawlinson, *Pulpit Commentary*, "Exodus," vol. 2, p. 212.

"Others suppose it ["an angel," Ex. 23:20; "mine angel," Ex. 23:23] to be the Son of God, the Angel of the covenant; for the

Israelites in the wilderness are said to 'tempt Christ,' and we may as well suppose him God's messenger, and the church's redeemer, before his incarnation, as the lamb slain from the foundation of the world."—*Matthew Henry's Commentary*, Exodus 23, general note.

"There seems to be no reason to doubt that, in this Messenger of Yahweh, we catch a glimpse of some mystery in the Godhead. For contrast with the inferior messenger, see chap. 33:2, 3."—J. B. Rotherham, *The Emphasized Old Testament* (1916), note on Ex. 23:20.

*On Judges 6:*

"The person that gave him the commission was 'an angel of the Lord;' it should seem, not a created angel, but the Son of God Himself, the Eternal Word, the Lord of the angels. . . . This angel is here called Jehovah, the incommunicable name of God, ver. 14, 16; and he saith, 'I will be with thee.'"—*Matthew Henry's Commentary*.

*On Judges 13:*

"And this angel . . . was the Lord himself, that is, the Word of the Lord, who was to be the Messiah, for his name is called Wonderful, ver. 18, and *Jehovah*, ver. 19."—*Ibid.*

*On Daniel 3:*

"There was a fourth seen with them in the fire, whose form, in Nebuchadnezzar's judgment, was 'like the Son of God;' he appeared as a Divine person, a messenger from heaven, not as a servant, but as a Son. 'Like an angel,' so some; and angels are called 'sons of God,' *Job* xxxviii. 7. In the apocryphal narrative of this story it is said, 'The angel of the Lord came down into the furnace;' and Nebuchadnezzar here saith, (ver. 28,) that God sent his angel and delivered them; and it was an angel that shut the lions' mouths when Daniel was in the den, *ch. vi.* 22. But some think it was the eternal Son of God, the angel of the covenant, and not a created angel. He appeared often in our nature before he assumed it for good and all [in his incarnation]; and never more seasonably, nor to give a more proper indication and presage of his great errand into the world, in the fulness of time, than now, when to deliver his chosen out of the fire he came and walked with them in the fire."—*Ibid.*

"In reality it was Christ, the Son of God, who appeared at this time in human shape."—T. Robinson, *Preacher's Homiletic Commentary* (1892), "Daniel," p. 72.

"In ver. 28, the king calls him God's 'angel,' which He no doubt was—the 'angel of the Lord,' otherwise called the 'Messenger of the Covenant,' the Son of God, who in the fulness of time was 'made flesh and dwelt among us.'"—*Ibid.*, p. 73.

*On Hebrews 12:*

"This is by many modern Expositors referred to *God*; but by the ancient and some modern ones, to *Christ*; which is far more agreeable to the context.—S. T. Bloomfield, *Greek New Testament* (1847) (vol. II, p. 475), on Heb. 12:25.

"'The voice sounding from Sinai.' See supra v. 19. The best Expositors are in general agreed that the [word] *oú* refers (as grammatical propriety would require) to *Christ*, notwithstanding that the thing is in Exodus ascribed to *God*. Nor is there any inconsistency, since the N. T. and the Rabbinical writings agree in representing it as the SON OF GOD, who appeared to the patriarchs, who delivered the Law by angels, and who was the ANGEL-JEHOVAH worshipped in the Hebrew Church. See Acts 7:53, and 1 Cor. 10:4, 9."—*Ibid.*, (vol. II, p. 475), on Heb. 12:26.

2. CONCERNING MICHAEL AS A TITLE OF CHRIST

*On Daniel 10:*

"Some . . . think *Michael* the archangel is no other than Christ himself, the angel of the covenant, and the Lord of the angels; he whom Daniel saw in vision, ver. 5. He 'came to help me,' ver. 13; 'and there is none but he that holdeth with me in these things,' ver. 21. Christ is the church's prince, angels are not."—*Matthew Henry's Commentary*.

*On Daniel 12:*

"Jesus Christ shall appear his church's patron and protector. 'At that time,' when the persecution is at the hottest, 'Michael shall stand up,' ver. 1. The angel had told Daniel what a fast friend Michael was to the church, *ch. x.* 21. He all along shewed it in the upper world, the angels knew it; but now 'Michael shall stand up' in his providence, and work deliverance for the Jews, 'when he sees that their power is gone,' *Deu. xxxii.* 36. Christ is that 'great prince,' for he is the 'Prince of the kings of the earth,' *Rev. i:5.*"—*Ibid.*

*On Jude 9:*

"Of this personage many things are spoken in the Jewish writings. 'Rabbi Judah Hakkodesh says: Wherever *Michael* is said to appear, the glory of the Divine Majesty is always to be under-

stood.' *Shemoth Rabba*, Sec. ii., fol. 104, 3. So it seems as if they considered Michael in some sort as we do the Messiah manifested in the flesh."—*Clarke's Commentary* (6 vol. ed.).

"The word *Michael* . . . *he who is like God*; hence by this personage, in the Apocalypse, many understood the Lord Jesus."—*Ibid.*

*On Rev. 12:7:*

"Michael was the man child which the woman brought forth."—*Clarke's Commentary*.

"This being 'a war in the heaven,' and waged by Michael, who is Christ (whose warfare is not like that of earthly kings), and by His messengers, is an intellectual and polemical warfare."—J. D. Glasgow, *Commentary on the Apocalypse* (1872).

"We have shown elsewhere that the Archangel Michael is an image of Christ victoriously combatant. Christ is an Archangel in His quality of Judge; and He appears as Judge, not only at the end of the world, but also in the preservation of the purity of His Church."—*Lange's Commentary* (1874), on Rev. 12:1-12, *Exegetical and Critical Synoptic View*, p. 238.

"'Michael and his angels' on one side, and 'the dragon and his angels' on the other. Christ, the great angel of the covenant, and his faithful followers; and Satan and all his instruments. This latter party would be much superior in number and outward strength to the other; but the strength of the church lies in having the Lord Jesus for the Captain of their salvation."—*Matthew Henry's Commentary*.

"The idea of the heavenly being who thus comes to view as a feature in old apocalyptic tradition is the source of the conception of the heavenly Messiah—the Son of Man. . . . We have already seen that the heavenly being 'like unto a son of man' of Dan. 7 was probably identified by the author . . . with Israel's angel-prince Michael; this angelic being was later, it would seem, invested with Messianic attributes, and so became the pre-existent heavenly Messiah."—*Abingdon Bible Commentary*, p. 846.

(See also *Calvin's Commentaries* on "Daniel," vol. 2, pp. 253, 368, also p. 13).

### **III. Questions on the Relation of Ellen G. White's Writings to the Bible**



# Ellen G. White's Writings and Their Relation to the Bible

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## QUESTION 9

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*Do Seventh-day Adventists regard the writings of Ellen G. White as on an equal plane with the writings of the Bible? Do you place her in the prophetic class with such men as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel? Are her interpretations of Bible prophecy regarded as final authority, and is belief in these writings made a test of fellowship in the Seventh-day Adventist Church?*

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Whatever the intent of these questions may be, we would note, as is more fully developed later on in this chapter:

1. That we do not regard the writings of Ellen G. White as an addition to the sacred canon of Scripture.
2. That we do not think of them as of universal application, as is the Bible, but particularly for the Seventh-day Adventist Church.
3. That we do not regard them in the same sense as the Holy Scriptures, which stand alone and unique as the standard by which all other writings must be judged.

Seventh-day Adventists uniformly believe that the canon of Scripture closed with the book of Revelation.

We hold that all other writings and teachings, from whatever source, are to be judged by, and are subject to, the Bible, which is the spring and norm of the Christian faith. We test the writings of Ellen G. White by the Bible, but in no sense do we test the Bible by her writings. Ellen G. White and others of our writers have gone on record again and again on this point.

In her first book, in 1851, she said concerning the Bible:

I recommend to you, dear reader, the Word of God as the rule of your faith and practice. By that Word we are to be judged.—*Early Writings*, p. 78.

Later she wrote:

The Spirit was not given—nor can it ever be bestowed—to supersede the Bible; for the Scriptures explicitly state that the Word of God is the standard by which all teaching and experience must be tested.—*The Great Controversy*, Introduction, p. vii.

And in her last appearance before the assembled delegates at the session of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in Washington, D.C., in 1909, after her message to the vast congregation, she held the Bible aloft in hands trembling with age, and said, "Brethren and sisters, I commend to you the Book." It was typical of her lifelong attitude—ever exalting, high above all, the Holy Scriptures as the foundation of our faith.

We have never considered Ellen G. White to be in the same category as the writers of the canon of Scripture. However, apart from the chosen writers of the canonical books of Scripture, God used a line of prophets or messengers who lived contemporaneously with the writers of the two Testaments, but whose utterances

were never a part of Scripture canon. These prophets or messengers were called of God to give encouragement, counsel, and admonition to the Lord's ancient people. Among these were such figures as Nathan, Gad, Heman, Asaph, Shemaiah, Azariah, Eliezer, Ahijah, Iddo, and Obed in the Old Testament, and Simon, John the Baptist, Agabus, and Silas in the New. The line also included women, such as Miriam, Deborah, and Huldah, who were called prophetesses, in ancient times, as well as Anna in the time of Christ, and Philip's four daughters, "which did prophesy" (Acts 21:9). The messages that came through these prophets, it should be recognized, came from the same God who spoke through those prophets whose writings were included in the Sacred Canon.

That some of these prophets not only spake but also wrote their inspired messages is evident from Scripture itself:

Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer (1 Chron. 29:29).

Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, first and last, are they not written in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of Iddo the seer against Jeroboam the son of Nebat? (2 Chron. 9:29).

It is in this latter category of messengers that we consider Ellen G. White to be. Among Seventh-day Adventists she was recognized as one who possessed the gift of the spirit of prophecy, though she herself never assumed the title of prophetess. In 1906 she explained why. Church members who believed that she was called to the prophetic office were puzzled by one of her public statements. Here is her explanation:

Some have stumbled over the fact that I said I did not claim to be a prophet. . . . Early in my youth I was asked several times, Are you a prophet? I have ever responded, I am the Lord's messenger. I know that many have called me a prophet, but I have made no claim to this title. . . . Why have I not claimed to be a prophet?—Because in these last days many who boldly claim that they are prophets are a reproach to the cause of Christ; and because my work includes much more than the word "prophet" signifies. . . . To claim to be a prophetess is something that I have never done. If others call me by that name, I have no controversy with them. But my work has covered so many lines that I can not call myself other than a messenger.—*The Review and Herald*, July 26, 1906.

Seventh-day Adventists regard her writings as containing inspired counsel and instruction concerning personal religion and the conduct of our denominational work. Under the same inspiration she also wrote much in the great field of sacred history, covering the experiences of God's people from the creation of the world to the ultimate establishment of the kingdom of God, with special emphasis on eschatology. That portion of her writings, however, that might be classified as predictions, actually forms but a small segment. And even when she deals with what is coming on the earth, her statements are only amplifications of clear Bible prophecy.

It is significant that in her counsels, or "testimonies," the attention of the reader is constantly directed to the authority of the Word of God as the sole foundation of faith and doctrine. In the Introduction to one of her larger books she sets forth important principles:

In His word, God has committed to men the knowledge necessary for salvation. The Holy Scriptures are to be accepted as an authoritative, infallible revelation of His will. They are the standard of character, the revealer of doctrines, and the test of

experience. "Every scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness; that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work." 2 Tim. 3:16, 17, Revised Version.

Yet the fact that God has revealed His will to men through His Word, has not rendered needless the continued presence and guiding of the Holy Spirit. On the contrary, the Spirit was promised by our Saviour, to open the Word to His servants, to illuminate and apply its teachings. And since it was the Spirit of God that inspired the Bible, it is impossible that the teaching of the Spirit should ever be contrary to that of the Word.—*The Great Controversy*, Introduction, p. vii.

While Adventists hold the writings of Ellen G. White in highest esteem, yet these are not the source of our expositions. We base our teachings on the Scriptures, the only foundation of all true Christian doctrine. However, it is our belief that the Holy Spirit opened to her mind important events and called her to give certain instructions for these last days. And inasmuch as these instructions, in our understanding, are in harmony with the Word of God, which Word alone is able to make us wise unto salvation, we as a denomination accept them as inspired counsels from the Lord. But we have never equated them with Scripture as some falsely charge. Mrs. White herself stated explicitly the relation of her writings to the Bible:

Little heed is given to the Bible, and the Lord has given a lesser light to lead men and women to the greater light.—*The Review and Herald*, Jan. 20, 1903.

"The Lord designs to warn you, to reprove, to counsel, through the testimonies given, and to impress your minds with the importance of the truth of His word."—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 665.

While Seventh-day Adventists recognize that the Scripture canon closed nearly two thousand years ago

and that there have been no additions to this compilation of sacred books, yet we believe that the Spirit of God, who inspired the Divine Word known to us as the Bible, has pledged to reveal Himself to the church through the different gifts of the Spirit. The apostle Peter in giving his explanation of the happenings of Pentecost quoted from the prophecy of Joel and applied that prophecy to the evident outworking of the Holy Spirit on that memorable day. And the apostle Paul, speaking of the different gifts that God had placed in the church, said: "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors, and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:11, 12).

And how long were these gifts to continue in the church? "Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (verses 13, 14).

So long as God's children would be beset by the cunning craftiness of the spirit of evil, just so long would the church need these special gifts. Moreover, the same apostle declared that the church that would be waiting for the coming of the Lord Jesus would "come behind in no gift," that they "may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 1:7, 8).

It is not our understanding that these gifts of the

Spirit take the place of the Word of God, nor does their acceptance make unnecessary the Scripture of truth. On the contrary, the acceptance of God's Word will lead God's people to a recognition and acceptance of the manifestations of the Spirit. Such manifestations will, of course, be in harmony with the Word of God. We know that some earnest Christians have the impression that these gifts ceased with the apostolic church. But Adventists believe that the closing of the Scripture canon did not terminate Heaven's communication with men through the gifts of the Spirit,\* but rather that Christ by the ministry of His Spirit guides His people, edifying and strengthening them, and especially so in these last challenging days of human history. And it is the Holy Spirit who divides "to every man severally as he will" (1 Cor. 12:11). It is God who bestows the gifts, and it is God Himself who takes the responsibility for these manifestations of the Spirit among the believers. He calls one here and one there and makes them the depositories of specific spiritual gifts. He calls one to be an apostle, one an evangelist, another a pastor or a teacher, and to another He gives the gift of prophecy.

It is our understanding that all these gifts will be in evidence in the church which will be "waiting for the coming of our Lord" (1 Cor. 1:7). Our interpretation of Bible prophecy leads us to believe that those who make up the remnant people of God in the last days of the history of the church will meet the full fury of the dragon's power as he goes forth to make war on those who "keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 12:17). That

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\* See A. G. Daniells, *Abiding Gift of Prophecy*.

expression "testimony of Jesus" is clearly defined, we believe, by the angel in Revelation 19:10. He says to John: "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

Commenting on this, James Moffat says:

"For the testimony or witness of (*i.e.*, borne by) Jesus is (*i.e.*, constitutes) the spirit of prophecy." This . . . specifically defines the brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus as possessors of prophetic inspiration. The testimony of Jesus is practically equivalent to Jesus testifying (xxii. 20). It is the self-revelation of Jesus (according to i. 1, due ultimately to God) which moves the Christian prophets.—*The Expositor's Greek Testament*, vol. 5, p. 465.

The Spirit of prophecy is intimately related to the gift of prophecy, the one being the Spirit that indites the prophecy, the other the evidence of the gift bestowed. They go together, each inseparably connected with the other. The gift is the manifestation of that which the Spirit of God bestows upon him whom, according to His own good purpose and plan, He selects as the one through whom such spiritual guidance is to come. Seventh-day Adventists believe that this gift was manifested in the life and ministry of Ellen G. White.

Briefly then, this is the Adventist understanding of Ellen G. White's writings. They have been for a hundred years, to use her own expression, "a lesser light" leading sincere men and women to "the greater light."

To answer the last part of the question, concerning the matter of church fellowship, we would say that while we revere the writings of Ellen G. White, and expect all who join the church to accept the doctrine of spiritual gifts as manifested in her experience, we do not make acceptance of her writings a matter for church discipline. She herself was explicit on this point. Speak-

ing of those who did not fully understand the gift, she said:

Such should not be deprived of the benefits and privileges of the church, if their Christian course is otherwise correct, and they have formed a good Christian character.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 1, p. 328.

J. N. Andrews, one of the founding fathers of the Advent Movement, wrote in 1870:

We therefore do not test the world in any manner by these gifts. Nor do we in our intercourse with other religious bodies who are striving to walk in the fear of God, in any way make these a test of Christian character.—*The Review and Herald*, Feb. 15, 1870.

James White, thrice General Conference president, speaking of the work of Ellen G. White, expressly declares that Adventists believe that God called her “to do a special work at this time, among this people. They do not, however, make a belief in this work a test of Christian fellowship.”—*The Review and Herald*, June 13, 1871, p. 205.

And this has been our consistent attitude throughout our history. However, if one who holds membership in our church loses confidence in these counsels and later stirs up enmity among the believers, we reserve the right to disfellowship such from the body. But such action will not be taken because of one’s lack of confidence in these writings, but rather because the one disaffected is stirring up strife among the believers.

After men and women have had evidence that the work is of God, and then join hands with those who fight against it, our people claim the right to separate from such.—*Ibid.*

F. M. Wilcox, for thirty-five years editor of the *Review and Herald*, our church paper, says:

In the practice of the church it has not been customary to disfellowship one because he did not recognize the doctrine of spiritual gifts. . . . A member of the church should not be excluded from membership because of his inability to recognize clearly the doctrine of spiritual gifts and its application to the second advent movement.—*The Testimony of Jesus*, pp. 141-143.

These statements reflect our consistent attitude through the years, and this is our position today.

## **IV. Questions on the Law and Legalism**



# Christ the Heart of the Advent Message

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## QUESTION 10

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*Are not the spiritual content and evangelical emphasis of your "Voice of Prophecy" radio program and "Faith for Today" telecast a rather far cry from the doctrinal and legal core of Adventism? Are they not rather a bid for good will, and a subtle attempt to draw those who enroll in your proffered Bible courses to gradually accept the doctrinal and legal heart of Adventism? Is this doctrinal and legalistic emphasis a reflection of the counsels of Ellen G. White?*

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In the evangelistic activities of Seventh-day Adventists, whether by means of radio programs, public services, or literature, there is no attempt at subtlety or effort to deceive. The heart of the Advent message is Christ and Him crucified.

May we say in simple sincerity that Seventh-day Adventists hold that Christianity is not merely an intellectual assent to a body of doctrines, no matter how true or orthodox. We believe that *Christianity is a real experience with Christ. Christianity is a relationship to a Person*—our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It is possible to know a thousand things about Christ, and yet never know Him. Such a situation, of course,

leaves the professing Christian as far from God as is the lost sinner.

We, as Adventists, definitely believe in *doctrine*. We hold a unified body of Biblical truth. *But that which saves is grace alone, through faith in the living Christ.* And similarly, that which justifies is His free and blessed grace. We likewise believe in *works*, and in full obedience to the will and commandments of God. But the works in which we believe, and that we seek to perform, are the *result, or fruitage*, of salvation, not a *means* to salvation, in whole or in part. And the obedience that we render is the loving response of a life that is saved by grace. Salvation is never earned; it is a gift from God through Jesus Christ. Otherwise, however sincere the effort may be, works frustrate the grace of God (Gal. 2:21).

We also believe that a specific message is due the world today, and that we were called into being to have a part in proclaiming it. But again, that message is simply *the everlasting gospel in the setting of God's great judgment hour, the imminent second coming of our Lord, and the preparation of men to meet God.* But that which prepares people to meet God is not merely a *warning* message, but the *saving* gospel. This great fundamental truth is ever before us, and in our hearts and our endeavors.

We repeat, this emphasis is not something subtle, as suggested in the question. It is not a lure, or trick, or bait. It is, instead, a serious endeavor to put first things definitely first in our public presentations, and to let the world see and hear and know that the heart burden of Adventism is Christ and His salvation.

As to Ellen G. White's counsels on these matters, her messages for more than half a century have consistently called for an uplifting of Christ and for primary emphasis upon full salvation in Him. Here are a few excerpts from her writings:

Of all professing Christians, Seventh-day Adventists should be foremost in uplifting Christ before the world. . . . The great center of attraction, Christ Jesus, must not be left out. It is at the cross of Christ that mercy and truth meet together, and righteousness and peace kiss each other.—*Gospel Workers*, p. 156.

Lift up Jesus, you that teach the people, lift Him up in sermon, in song, in prayer. Let all your powers be directed to pointing souls, confused, bewildered, lost, to "the Lamb of God." . . . Let the science of salvation be the burden of every sermon, the theme of every song. Let it be poured forth in every supplication. Bring nothing into your preaching to supplement Christ, the wisdom and power of God.—*Ibid.*, p. 160.

Present the truth as it is in Jesus, making plain the requirements of the law and the gospel. Present Christ, the way, the truth, and the life, and tell of His power to save all who come to Him.—*Ibid.*, p. 154.

Christ crucified for our sins, Christ risen from the dead, Christ ascended on high, is the science of salvation that we are to learn and to teach. . . . It is through the gift of Christ that we receive every blessing.—*Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 8, pp. 287, 288.

No discourse should ever be preached without presenting Christ and Him crucified as the foundation of the gospel. Ministers would reach more hearts if they would dwell more upon practical godliness.—*Gospel Workers*, pp. 158, 159.

Christ and His righteousness,—let this be our platform, the very life of our faith.—*The Review and Herald*, Aug. 31, 1905.

The sacrifice of Christ as an atonement for sin is the great truth around which all other truths cluster. In order to be rightly understood and appreciated, every truth in the Word of God, from Genesis to Revelation, must be studied in the light that streams from the cross of Calvary.—*Gospel Workers*, p. 315.

The message of the gospel of His grace was to be given to the church in clear and distinct lines, that the world should no

longer say that Seventh-day Adventists talk the law, the law, but do not teach or believe Christ.—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 92.

From these typical quotations it is evident that Adventists do not and could not logically derive any legalistic emphasis from Ellen G. White.

# The Basis and Fruitage of Christian Experience

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## QUESTION 11

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*Can one who holds Seventh-day Adventist views have the assurance in his soul of present salvation, of sins forgiven, and of full acceptance with the Lord? Or does he have to live in uncertainty, pending whatever decision might be rendered in the investigative judgment? And is not this uncertainty reflected in the writings of Ellen G. White?*

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One who truly understands and accepts the teachings of the Seventh-day Adventist Church can assuredly know that he is born again, and that he is fully accepted by the Lord. He has in his soul the assurance of present salvation, and need be in no uncertainty whatsoever. In fact, he may know this so fully that he can truly "rejoice in the Lord" (Phil. 4:4) and in "the God of his salvation" (Ps. 24:5). As the foregoing questions touch the whole plan of God's salvation for man, we would call attention to the following provisions.

### I. God's Plan and Provision of Redemption

1. THE INITIATIVE IN THE PLAN OF SALVATION IS FROM GOD, NOT FROM MAN.—"All things," we read, "are of [Gr. *ek*, "out of"] God" (2 Cor. 5:18). We

know that *He* “hath reconciled us” (verse 18); that “*God* was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself” (verse 19); that it was *not we* who first loved God, but *He* loved us (1 John 4:9, 10); that *Christ* is the “propitiation for our sins” (1 John 2:2); and that “we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son” (Rom. 5:10). All this comes to us “according to the gift of the grace of God” (Eph. 3:7). And inasmuch as the writings of Ellen G. White have been mentioned, we shall quote a number of her statements that are clear and consistent on the fundamental principles of personal salvation and Christian experience. For example, on this point:

Grace is an attribute of God exercised toward undeserving human beings. We did not seek for it, but it was sent in search of us. God rejoices to bestow His grace upon us, not because we are worthy, but because we are so utterly unworthy. Our only claim to His mercy is our great need.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 161.

**2. CHRIST IS THE ONLY SAVIOUR OF LOST MANKIND.**—There is, and can be, no other Saviour. This thought was long ago brought home to God’s ancient people. Said Jehovah, “I, even I, am the Lord; and beside me there is no saviour” (Isa. 43:11); “There is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour. . . . Look unto me, and be ye saved” (Isa. 45:21, 22). (See also Isa. 60:16; Hosea 13:4.)

Jesus Christ our Lord is the only foundation (1 Cor. 3:11); His name is the only name “whereby we must be saved” (Acts 4:12). This thought—that there is salvation in no other—was highlighted in the statement made to Joseph concerning the work of Jesus, “He shall save his people from their sins” (Matt. 1:21).

The literal rendering of the Greek text is, “He *himself* shall save his people.” “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” (1 Tim. 1:15); He alone “is able also to save them to the uttermost” (Heb. 7:25). That understanding is basic. Only in and through Christ can we be saved.

**3. MAN CANNOT SAVE HIMSELF; IN AND OF HIMSELF HE IS HOPELESSLY LOST.**—(a) There is no salvation in man for man. No man can “redeem his brother” (Ps. 49:7). (b) Without the salvation provided in Christ Jesus our Lord, man would be hopelessly lost. “There is none righteous, no, not one” (Rom. 3:10); “There is none that doeth good, no, not one” (verse 12); “All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (verse 23). There is therefore no hope outside of Jesus the Saviour. Isaiah graphically describes the natural condition of man: “The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores” (Isa. 1:5, 6).

Jeremiah adds, “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked” (Jer. 17:9). The apostle Paul declares that the man who is “without God” has “no hope” (Eph. 2:12). He is even “dead in trespasses and sins” (verse 1). Consequently, if man is to be saved, help—divine help—must come to his aid.

**4. SINCE MAN IS DEAD IN SIN, EVEN THE INITIAL PROMPTINGS TO A BETTER LIFE MUST COME FROM GOD.**—Christ is the true light, who “lighteth every man that cometh into the world” (John 1:9). This light, in some way known only to Divine Providence, penetrates the darkness of human hearts and kindles the first spark

of desire after God. If the soul begins to seek for God, then “the Father which hath sent me [Christ]” will “draw him [the seeker]” (John 6:44). Again, “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me” (John 12:32). So even the desire to repent comes from above, for Jesus our Saviour *gives* “repentance” and *grants* “forgiveness of sins” (Acts 5:31).

The complete change thus wrought in the human heart is not by an act of our own wills, certainly not by ethical uplift or social reform endeavor, but wholly by the new birth. We are to be “born again [“from above,” margin]” (John 3:3); “born of God” (1 John 3:9); born of the Holy Spirit (John 3:5, 6); born through the Word of God (1 Peter 1:23, R.S.V.). Truly then, this is a work of divine grace. In a very real sense we are “his workmanship” (Eph. 2:10). In the act of “regeneration” *God saves us*; it is *He* who sheds on us the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5, 6).

5. NOTHING WE CAN EVER Do WILL MERIT THE FAVOR OF GOD.—Salvation is of grace. It is grace that “bringeth salvation” (Titus 2:11). It is “through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved” (Acts 15:11). We are not saved by “works” (Rom. 4:6; Eph. 2:9; 2 Tim. 1:9), even though they be *good* works (Titus 3:5), or even “wonderful works” (Matt. 7:22). Neither can we be saved by “law” (Rom. 8:3), nor by the “deeds” or the “works” of the law (Rom. 3:20, 28; Gal. 3:2, 5, 10). And neither the “law of Moses,” nor the Decalogue can save us (Acts 13:39; Rom. 7:7-10). The law of God was never designed to save men. It is a looking glass, in which, when we gaze, we see our sinfulness. That is as far as the law of God can go with

a sinful man. It can reveal his sin, but is powerless to remove it, or to save him from its guilt and penalty and power.

But, thank God, “what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh” (Rom. 8:3), God did—*in the person of His Son*. In Him a fountain is open “for sin and for uncleanness” (Zech. 13:1). And into this fount all may plunge and be “washed” from their sins by Christ’s own blood (Rev. 1:5). Wonderful as it may seem, the redeemed can rejoice now that they “have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb” (Rev. 7:14). True it is that by *His* grace (Eph. 2:5, 8), *His* mercy (Titus 3:5), *His* gift (Eph. 2:8), *His* gospel (Rom. 1:16), and according to *His* purpose (Rom. 8:28), we are saved.

6. WHILE SALVATION IS OF GOD, A SURRENDER OF THE WILL IS CALLED FOR.—After the primary promptings of the Spirit of God, and the magnetic drawings of the love of God, the soul must accept, and must yield to, its great Deliverer. This act of surrender, prompted by divine grace, makes it possible for God to extend to the soul all the wonderful provisions of His bounty. This act, or attitude, of the soul is expressed in various ways in Holy Scripture:

We are to *believe*—“whosoever believeth in him” (John 3:16); to *yield*—“yield yourselves unto God” (Rom. 6:13); to *submit*—“submit yourselves therefore to God” (James 4:7); to “*mortify* the deeds of the body” (Rom. 8:13)—literally this means “put to death”; to *present* our bodies to God—“present your bodies a living sacrifice” (Rom. 12:1); to *reckon* ourselves dead to sin—“reckon ye also yourselves to be

dead indeed unto sin" (Rom. 6:11); and to *die* unto sin—"if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin" (Rom. 8:10).

Whatever is represented by these acts of the will is certainly not in the nature of "works," and does not in the least degree add to the efficacy of salvation. No! It rather denotes the attitude of the soul, responding to the overtures of God's free grace in making possible the application, to our hearts, of the boundless bestowal of the grace of God.

**7. CHRISTIAN LIFE AND EXPERIENCE IS A GROWTH IN GRACE.**—The Christian life is more than the initial act of faith, or that act of surrender in accepting Jesus Christ as Lord. By that act we pass "from death unto life" (John 5:24) and are "born again" (John 3:3); but from there on we must grow. It is the same in physical human life. Birth is one thing. It is the beginning of life. But none would find satisfaction in a child that did not grow. It is similarly God's purpose that we should "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18). As spiritual babes we are to partake of "the sincere milk of the word" (1 Peter 2:2), but there must be growth so that we may partake of needful "strong meat" (Heb. 5:12, 14).

## II. Believing in Jesus

Our Christian life is to be a constant attitude of believing in Jesus. We begin by believing, and by grace we are to keep on believing. We are not only to "yield," but to keep on yielding. We are to "submit," and keep on submitting. We are not only to "die" to sin, but

we are to "reckon" ourselves dead unto sin, and keep on reckoning. We are to "present" our bodies to God, and keep on presenting them to God. All this is a work of grace.

The Christian life calls for constant surrender, constant consecration, constant yielding of the heart and life to God. We, who were dead *in sin* (Eph. 2:1), are now dead *to sin* (Rom. 6:11). We have identified ourselves with Jesus in His death, and so have died with Him (Col. 2:20); in fact, our "life is hid with Christ in God" (Col. 3:3).

This thought is beautifully expressed through the Greek tenses in the New Testament. In John 3:18, 36, where we read "he that believeth," the Greek form is the participle in the present tense, the idea being that "the one believing on Him who continues to believe" and who "makes it a life habit" will be saved. The present tense with the idea of continuance is also seen in the phrase "mortify the deeds of the body" (Rom. 8:13). The idea is that of a continuous attitude of putting to death the lusts of the flesh.

Ellen G. White stated it this way:

It is not safe to be occasional Christians. We must be Christ-like in our actions all the time. Then, through grace, we are safe for time and for eternity.—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 487.

Again:

Divine grace is needed at the beginning, divine grace at every step of advance, and divine grace alone can complete the work. . . . We may have had a measure of the Spirit of God, but by prayer and faith we are continually to seek more of the Spirit.—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 508.

### III. Have No Confidence in the Flesh

In the Christian life there is a constant warfare. “For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would” (Gal. 5:17). One who lives after the flesh cannot please God (Rom. 8:8), for he who sows to the flesh will reap corruption (Gal. 6:8). Living according to the flesh means death (Rom. 8:13). The fact is, that in our flesh is no good thing (Rom. 7:18).

So we are to “have no confidence in the flesh” (Phil. 3:3). While here in this vale of tears our hope lies solely in Christ our Lord. If we “walk in the Spirit” we shall not “fulfill the lust of the flesh” (Gal. 5:16). And even here and now, victory may be ours if we enter into the experience of the apostle Paul: “I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me” (Gal. 2:20).

### IV. Growth in the Christian Life

Growth in the Christian life means intimate fellowship with Jesus Christ our Lord. It means joy and assurance; and it means constant gratitude to God for the wonderful deliverance He has wrought for us. But there is a serious side to this experience. Observe:

*It calls for daily self-denial*—“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me” (Luke 9:23).

*It calls for daily sacrifice*—“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your

bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Rom. 12:1).

*It calls for daily surrender*—"Yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness" (Rom. 6:19). "Yield yourselves unto God" (verse 13).

And again Mrs. White attests:

It is not only at the beginning of the Christian life that this renunciation of self is to be made. At every advance step heavenward it is to be renewed. All our good works are dependent on a power outside of ourselves. Therefore there needs to be a continual reaching out of the heart after God, a continual, earnest, heartbreaking confession of sin and humbling of the soul before Him. Only by constant renunciation of self and dependence on Christ can we walk safely.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, pp. 159, 160.

#### V. Complete Distrust of Self Imperative

There is no place for pride in the Christian life. We have nothing of which to boast (Eph. 2:9). Well might we all learn the lesson of humility seen in the life of Paul: "I am the least of the apostles" (1 Cor. 15:9); "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given" (Eph. 3:8).

After all, we can do nothing of ourselves. Jesus said, "Without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5). We know nothing of ourselves (1 Cor. 4:4; 2 Cor. 3:5). Well might we cry out, "Who is sufficient for these things?" (2 Cor. 2:16). But in the Scripture we are assured that "our sufficiency is of God" (2 Cor. 3:5). And this sufficiency is *all-sufficient*. Our faith is to "rest . . . in the power of God" (1 Cor. 2:5, R.S.V.). The power in our life and ministry is to be "of God, and not of us" (2 Cor. 4:7). We live "by the power of God" (2 Cor. 13:4), for it is His "power that worketh in us"

(Eph. 3:20). "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13), "working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ" (Heb. 13:21).

Once more Mrs. White attests:

None of the apostles or prophets ever claimed to be without sin. Men who have lived nearest to God, men who would sacrifice life itself rather than knowingly commit a wrong act, men whom God had honored with divine light and power, have confessed the sinfulness of their own nature. They have put no confidence in the flesh, have claimed no righteousness of their own, but have trusted wholly in the righteousness of Christ. So will it be with all who behold Christ.—*Ibid.*, p. 160.

## VI. Hungering and Thirsting After God

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness" (Matt. 5:6). This will be the mark of the true child of God. Having none of his own, he longs for the righteousness of God. Thank God for the assurance, "Ye shall be filled" (Luke 6:21). Christ was here emphasizing the experience of David of old: "My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee" (Ps. 63:1); "My soul thirsteth for God" (Ps. 42:2); "My heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God" (Ps. 84:2). This is the true hunger of spirit, the longing of the human heart to be made like unto Christ. It is under such conditions that God "satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness" (Ps. 107:9).

1. THERE WILL BE GENUINE FRUITAGE IN THE LIVES OF GOD'S FAITHFUL CHILDREN.—There will be genuine progress in the bearing of fruit in the Christian life. And this will develop as we go on from faith to faith. In John's Gospel we read of "fruit" (John 15:2),

“more fruit” (verse 2), then “much fruit” (verse 5), and finally that “your fruit should remain” (verse 16). So we are to go on “from strength to strength” (Ps. 84:7) and from victory to victory, because it is God who “giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 15:57). “Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ” (2 Cor. 2:14).

Then there are the “fruits of righteousness” (Phil. 1:11; compare James 3:18). “The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth” (Eph. 5:9). The fuller outline appears in the epistle to the Galatians—“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law” (Gal. 5:22, 23).

What a wonderful portrayal! The paramount fruit of the Spirit is *love*. All that follow are but aspects of this divine quality. Just as various colors make up sunlight, so these graces together constitute love. Thus, *joy* is love exulting; *peace* is love in repose; *long-suffering* is love untiring; *gentleness* is love enduring; *goodness* is love in action; *faith* is love in confidence; *meekness* is love under discipline; while *temperance* is love in self-control.

This fruitage is to be seen in the life of the Christian. These graces do not grow by any effort of our own, but they are manifested in our lives because Christ dwells in our hearts by faith (Eph. 3:17). These graces are in Christ; and when Christ dwells in us, He lives out in us the wonderful qualities of His own perfect character.

Works as a *means* of salvation have no place in the

plan of God. We cannot be justified at all by any kind of works. Justification is wholly an act of God, and we are but the recipients of His unbounded grace.

But works as the *fruitage* of salvation do have a definite place in the plan of God. This is seen in the spiritual graces to be manifested in the children of God, as already noted. We are to "work the works of God" (John 6:28). There is the "work of faith" (1 Thess. 1:3); and every one that is "born of him" "doeth righteousness" (1 John 2:29). "Good works" are referred to many times in the New Testament (see Eph. 2:10), but it is to be borne in mind that in all our work of faith (2 Thess. 1:11), our faith must be activated by the love of God (Gal. 5:6). So, in all things "the love of Christ" is to constrain us (2 Cor. 5:14).

Ellen G. White writes:

No outward observances can take the place of simple faith and entire renunciation of self. But no man can empty himself of self. We can only consent for Christ to accomplish the work. Then the language of the soul will be, Save me in spite of myself, my weak, unchristlike self. Lord, take my heart; for I cannot give it. It is Thy property. Keep it pure, for I cannot keep it for Thee. Mold me, fashion me, raise me into a pure and holy atmosphere, where the rich current of Thy love can flow through my soul.—*Ibid.*, p. 159.

It will be noted that the "fruit of the Spirit" (Gal. 5:22, 23) is in full harmony with the law of God, for against the manifestation of these graces in the life "there is no law" (verse 23). In other words, the person in whose life these graces are seen, will fulfill the commandments of God. He cannot do this of himself; he is not expected to. But with Christ dwelling in the life, Christ's own righteous life (John 15:10) is both

imputed and imparted to the child of God. Thus David exclaimed, "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them" (Ps. 119:165). Hence the beloved apostle could write: "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments." "But whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in him" (1 John 2:3, 5). And, "by this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments" (1 John 5:2).

We are to keep a balanced view of the plan of God. His purpose is that His people be righteous. They are not naturally righteous. But in the gospel of the grace of God there is provision "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit" (Rom. 8:4). So, "circumcision is nothing; and want of it is nothing; but to keep the commandments of God is everything" (1 Cor. 7:19, *Twentieth Century*).

**2. THE CHILD OF GOD MAY HAVE CONFIDENCE AND ASSURANCE.**—It is our privilege, and really our heritage as the blood-bought children of God, to have "full assurance" (Col. 2:2), to enjoy "full assurance of faith" (Heb. 10:22), and to know the "full assurance of hope unto the end" (Heb. 6:11). We have confidence in Him (1 John 5:14), "confidence toward God" (1 John 3:21).

To the true children of God, this experience is not hearsay; it is not veneer or make-believe; it is a real, genuine experience. They can say with all confidence, yet with humility, "We *know* that we have passed from death unto life" (1 John 3:14); We *know* "that we are

in him" (1 John 2:5); "We *know* that he abideth in us" (1 John 3:24).

### VII. Three Tenses in Salvation

Salvation from sin is set forth in three "tenses"—past, present, and future. It is a progressive work. The child of God may properly say, "*I have been* saved from the *penalty* of sin"; also, "*I am being* saved from the *power* of sin." And he can also say, with truth, "*I shall be* saved from the very *presence and possibility* of sin."

Concerning the first expression, "*I am saved*," Paul wrote to Titus, "According to his mercy he *saved us*" (Titus 3:5); likewise, "We are saved by hope" (Rom. 8:24). In both instances the Greek verb is in the aorist form. For example, this last text could more accurately read, "*We were saved*" (R.S.V.), or "*We have been saved*" (Weymouth). This stresses an aspect of salvation that is an accomplished fact.

But it is also true that as sincere believers in Christ *we are being saved*. This is something in process of being accomplished day by day. We read, "Unto us which are saved" (1 Cor. 1:18). But again the better rendering of the Greek is "to us who are being saved" (R.S.V.). This same thought is seen in Acts 2:47 where the correct translation is "those who were being saved" (R.S.V.).

Then there is the expression, "*I shall be saved*." We also read, "We shall be saved" (Acts 15:11; Rom. 5:9).

This is the threefold way in which the work of salvation touches human hearts. Thus we *have been*

saved—justification; we *are being* saved—sanctification; and we *shall be* saved—glorification.

### VIII. God's People Delight to Rejoice in the Lord

When God forgives our sins and gives us the assurance in His Word that they are forgiven (Eph. 4:32), we have no need to worry and concern ourselves about the future. It is true that there will be a judgment where the sins of men will be dealt with. But that need cause no concern to the child of God, for as a Christian he now abides in God, and God abides in him (John 14:20). "Your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake" (1 John 2:12). Faith lays hold of His word and rejoices in the knowledge of sins forgiven.

The one who has truly passed from death unto life, and maintains an attitude of constant surrender, does not live his life in uncertainty. Having placed his case in the hands of his mighty Advocate, he has no fear for the future. Christ is his surety, and he lives his life in an atmosphere of complete trust in God, rejoicing that "perfect love casteth out fear."

In the light of such great salvation, ought not the lives of God's people to be lives of rejoicing? Even the Israelites long ago in Old Testament times knew what this meant. Note their expressions of joy and gladness: "Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous" (Ps. 33:1); "Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the Lord your God" (Joel 2:23). And the psalmist said, "Let thy saints shout for joy" (Ps. 132:9); "Let them ever shout for joy" (Ps. 5:11).

Over and over again came the refrain, "Praise ye the Lord," and the people took this to heart, for we

read, “I will be glad and rejoice in thee” (Ps. 9:2); “My soul shall be joyful in the Lord” (Ps. 35:9); “I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God” (Isa. 61:10); “I will declare what he hath done for my soul” (Ps. 66:16).

In the New Testament there is the same note of rejoicing. “Joy” is one of the great words of the New Testament. Indeed, the gospel itself is declared to be “tidings of great joy” (Luke 2:10). And Jesus, the author of eternal salvation (Heb. 5:9), wished His disciples to partake of *His* joy, that in and through Him *their* joy might be full (John 15:11; 16:24). The great apostle to the Gentiles expressed the same thought, when he exhorted the saints to “rejoice in the Lord” (Phil. 3:1); to “rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice” (Phil. 4:4). Thus we may unite our voices with the celestial choirs, “saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing” (Rev. 5:12).

# The Ten Commandments, God's Standard of Conduct

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## QUESTION 12

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*Many Christians have gained the impression that Seventh-day Adventists are legalists—that they teach that it is necessary to keep the law in order to be saved. Just what is the Adventist attitude toward the law? And how does your belief compare with the historic Protestant position?*

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The Seventh-day Adventist position on the Ten Commandments is set forth briefly in our statement of "Fundamental Beliefs." Section 6 reads:

6. That the will of God as it relates to moral conduct is comprehended in His law of ten commandments; that these are great moral, unchangeable precepts, binding upon all men, in every age. Ex. 20:1-17.

The ten commandments spoken by God from Mount Sinai are set apart from all the other commands of God recorded in the Bible by their very nature and the manner of their delivery. They themselves are the best evidence of their enduring character. Man's moral nature responds to them with assent, and it is impossible for an enlightened Christian to imagine a condition or circumstance—God still being God, and man still being a moral creature—where they would not be operative.

Correctly viewed, the moral law is much more than a legal code; it is a transcript of the character of God. Says A. H. Strong, Baptist theologian:

The law of God, then, is simply an expression of the nature of God in the form of moral requirement, and a necessary expression of that nature in view of the existence of moral beings (Ps. 19:7; *cf.* 1). To the existence of this law all men bear witness. The consciences even of the heathen testify to it (Rom. 2:14, 15). Those who have the written law recognize this elemental law as of greater compass and penetration (Rom. 7:14; 8:4). The perfect embodiment and fulfillment of this law is seen only in Christ (Rom. 10:4; Phil. 3:8, 9).—*Systematic Theology*, p. 538.

Ellen G. White has expressed these truths in somewhat different words:

The law of God is as sacred as Himself. It is a revelation of His will, a transcript of His character, the expression of divine love and wisdom. The harmony of creation depends upon the perfect conformity of all beings . . . to the law of the Creator.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 52.

The divine beauty of the character of Christ, of whom the noblest and most gentle among men are but a faint reflection; of whom Solomon by the Spirit of inspiration wrote, He is “the chiefest among ten thousand, . . . yea, He is altogether lovely” (Song of Solomon 5:10-16); of whom David, seeing Him in prophetic vision, said, “Thou art fairer than the children of men” (Psalm 45:2); Jesus, the express image of the Father’s person, the effulgence of His glory, the self-denying Redeemer, throughout His pilgrimage of love on earth was a living representation of the character of the law of God. In His life it is made manifest that heaven-born love, Christlike principles, underlie the laws of eternal rectitude.—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing* (1956), p. 49.

For a true and full understanding of what God means by His moral law, the Christian must turn to Christ. He it is who enables the newborn soul to live the new life. This is really the indwelling of Christ in his heart, and hence the believer, because of his sub-

mission to his Lord, lives out the principles of God's character in his heart and life.

The Adventist position on the relation of the Ten Commandments to salvation is set forth in "Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists," section 8:

8. That the law of ten commandments points out sin, the penalty of which is death. The law cannot save the transgressor from his sin, nor impart power to keep him from sinning. In infinite love and mercy, God provides a way whereby this may be done. He furnishes a substitute, even Christ the Righteous One, to die in man's stead, making "him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." 2 Cor. 5:21. That one is justified, not by obedience to the law, but by the grace that is in Christ Jesus. By accepting Christ, man is reconciled to God, justified by His blood for the sins of the past, and saved from the power of sin by His indwelling life. Thus the gospel becomes "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Rom. 1:16. This experience is wrought by the divine agency of the Holy Spirit, who convinces of sin and leads to the Sin-Bearer, inducting the believer into the new covenant relationship, where the law of God is written on his heart, and through the enabling power of the indwelling Christ, his life is brought into conformity to the divine precepts. The honor and merit of this wonderful transformation belong wholly to Christ. 1 John 2:1, 2; 3:4; Rom. 3:20; 5:8-10; 7:7; Eph. 2:8-10; 3:17; Gal. 2:20; Heb. 8:8-12.

This is in full harmony with what is taught in the historic confessions of faith:

*The Waldensian Catechism* (c. 1500) and *The Confession of the Waldenses* (1655) both cite the Ten Commandments and the Lord's Prayer as "fundamentals of our faith and our devotion." Again, "Living faith is to believe in God, that is, to love him and to keep his commandments." (SCHAFF, *The Creeds of Christendom*, vol. 1, pp. 572, 573, 575; vol. 3, pp. 757, 768.)

*Luther's Small Catechism* (1529), following the quoting of the Ten Commandments, says: "We should, therefore, love and trust in him, and gladly obey his Commandments." (SCHAFF, vol. 3, p. 77.)

*The Heidelberg Catechism* (1563), most popular of all the Reformed symbols, and the first to be planted on American soil, among the Dutch and German Reformed churches (*ibid.*, vol. 1, p. 549), after an extended series of questions on the Decalogue, states that the Ten Commandments are strictly enjoined that we may the "more earnestly seek forgiveness of sins and righteousness in Christ"; and "become more and more changed into the image of God." (*Ibid.*, vol. 3, pp. 340-349.)

*The (Lutheran) Formula of Concord* (1576) says that Christians are set free from the "curse and constraint" of the law, but not from the law itself. On these Ten Commandments they are to meditate day and night, and "continually exercise themselves in the keeping thereof." It condemns as "false and pernicious" the concept that the Decalogue is not the standard of righteousness for the Christian. (*Ibid.*, pp. 130-135.)

*The Scotch Confession of Faith* (1560), article XV, stresses the perfection of the law and the imperfection of man (*ibid.*, pp. 456, 457).

*The Westminster Shorter Catechism* (1647), adopted by the Church of Scotland in 1648, by the Presbyterian Synod of New York and Philadelphia in 1788, and by nearly all Calvinist, Presbyterian, and Congregational churches. It is more extensively used than any other, except the Small Catechism of Luther and the Heidelberg Catechism (*ibid.*, p. 676). It de-

clared that the Ten Commandments, or moral law, reveals the duty that God requires of man. And it adds, "We are bound to keep all his commandments." (*Ibid.*, pp. 678, 684, 685.)

*New Hampshire Baptist Confession* (1833), accepted in the Northern and Western States. Article XII, "Of the Harmony of the Law and the Gospel," declares that the law of God is "the eternal and unchangeable rule of his moral government," and that we are, through our Mediator, to give "unfeigned obedience to the holy Law," as one great end of the gospel. (*Ibid.*, p. 746.)

Not only so, but Adventists share with hundreds of eminent men of various faiths—Calvin, Wesley, Clarke, Barnes, Spurgeon, Moody, G. Campbell Morgan, Henry Clay Trumbull, Billy Graham—belief in the perpetuity of God's moral law of ten commandments, and in its being in force in all dispensations, as attested by these typical excerpts:

CALVIN—ETERNAL RULE OF LIFE.—We must not imagine that the coming of Christ has freed us from the authority of the law; for it is the eternal rule of a devout and holy life, and must, therefore, be as unchangeable, as the justice of God, which it embraced, is constant and uniform.—*Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists* (1845), vol. I, p. 277.

WESLEY—REMAINS IN FORCE.—But the moral law contained in the ten commandments, and enforced by the prophets, he did not take away. It was not the design of his coming to revoke any part of this. This is a law which never can be broken, which "stands fast as the faithful witness in heaven." The moral stands on an entirely different foundation from the ceremonial or ritual law. . . . Every part of this law must remain in force upon all mankind, and in all ages; as not depending either on time or place, or any other circumstances liable to change, but on the nature of God, and the nature of man, and their un-

changeable relation to each other.—*Sermons on Several Occasions*, vol. 1, pp. 221, 222.

MORGAN—OBEDIENCE BY FAITH.—It is only when grace enables men to keep the law, that they are free from it; just as a moral man who lives according to the laws of the country is free from arrest. God has not set aside law, but he has found a way by which man can fulfil law, and so be free from it.—*The Ten Commandments* (1901), p. 23.

SPURGEON—THE LAW OF GOD PERPETUAL.—Very great mistakes have been made about the law. Not long ago there were those about us who affirmed that the law is utterly abrogated and abolished, and they openly taught that believers were not bound to make the moral law the rule of their lives. What would have been sin in other men they counted to be no sin in themselves. From such Antinomianism as that may God deliver us. . . .

THE LAW OF GOD MUST BE PERPETUAL. There is no abrogation of it, nor amendment of it. It is not to be toned down or adjusted to our fallen condition; but every one of the Lord's righteous judgments abideth for ever. . . .

Does any man say to me, "You see, then, instead of the ten commandments we have received the two commandments, and these are much easier." I answer that this reading of the law is not in the least easier. Such a remark implies a want of thought and experience. Those two precepts comprehend the ten at their fullest extent, and cannot be regarded as the erasure of a jot or tittle of them. . . .

Christ has not, therefore, abrogated or at all moderated the law to meet our helplessness; he has left it in all its sublime perfection, as it always must be left, and he has pointed out how deep are its foundations, how elevated are its heights, how measureless are its length and breadth. . . .

To show that he never meant to abrogate the law, our Lord Jesus has embodied all its commands in his own life. In his own person there was a nature which was perfectly conformed to the law of God; and as was his nature such was his life. He could say, "Which of you convinceth me of sin?" and again "I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love." . . .

By his death he has vindicated the honour of God's moral government, and made it just for him to be merciful. When the lawgiver himself submits to the law, when the sovereign himself bears the extreme penalty of that law, then is the justice of God

set upon such a glorious high throne that all admiring worlds must wonder at it. If therefore it is clearly proven that Jesus was obedient to the law, even to the extent of death, he certainly did not come to abolish or abrogate it; and if *he* did not remove it, who can do so? If he declares that he came to establish it, who shall overthrow it? . . .

The law is absolutely complete, and you can neither add to it nor take from it. "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For he that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law." If, then, no part of it can be taken down, it must stand, and stand for ever.—*The Perpetuity of the Law of God*, published in *Spurgeon's Expository Encyclopedia*, by Baker.

**BILLY GRAHAM—PERMANENT AND UNCHANGING.**—The word "Law" is used by the New Testament writers in two senses. Sometimes it refers to the ceremonial law of the Old Testament, which is concerned about ritual matters and regulations regarding food and drink and things of that kind. From this law Christians are indeed free. But the New Testament also speaks of the moral law, which is of a permanent, unchanging character and is summarized in the Ten Commandments.—Associated Press Dispatch, *Chicago Tribune Syndicate*:

**MOODY—LAW ETERNAL: OBEYED WITH LOVE IN THE HEART.**—The question for each one of us is—are we keeping them [the commandments]? If God should weigh us by them, would we be found wanting or not wanting? Do we keep the law, the *whole* law? Are we obeying God with all our heart? Do we render Him a full and willing obedience?

These ten commandments are not ten different laws; they are one law. If I am being held up in the air by a chain with ten links, and I break one of them, down I come, just as surely as if I break the whole ten. If I am forbidden to go out of an enclosure, it makes no difference at what point I break through the fence. "Whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." "The golden chain of obedience is broken if one link is missing." . . .

For fifteen hundred years man was under the law, and no one was equal to it. Christ came and showed that the commandments went beyond the mere letter; and can any one since say that he has been able to keep them in his own strength? . . .

I can imagine that you are saying to yourself, "If we are to be judged by these laws, how are we going to be saved? Nearly every one of them has been broken by us—in spirit, if not in letter." I almost hear you say: "I wonder if Mr. Moody is ready to be weighed? Would he like to put those tests to himself?"

With all humility I reply that if God commanded me to step into the scales now, I am ready.

"What!" you say, "haven't you broken the law?"

Yes, I have. I was a sinner before God the same as you; but forty years ago I plead guilty at His bar. I cried for mercy, and He forgave me. If I step into the scales, the Son of God has promised to be with me. I would not dare to step in without Him. If I did, how quickly the scales would fly up!

Christ kept the law. If He had ever broken it, He would have had to die for Himself; but because He was a Lamb without spot or blemish, His atoning death is efficacious for you and me.

. . . Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. We are righteous in God's sight because the righteousness of God, which is by faith in Jesus Christ, is unto all and upon all them that believe. . . .

If the love of God is shed abroad in your heart, you will be able to fulfil the law.—*Weighed and Wanting*, pp. 119-124.

"MOODY MONTHLY"—CHRIST AMPLIFIED THEIR SCOPE.—A few years ago a series of articles was printed in the *Moody Bible Institute Monthly* under the head "Are Christians Freed From the Law?" The writer of the series says in his first article, "Let us now see how the moral law is emphasized, enlarged, and enforced in all its details in the New Testament." He shows how Christ and the apostles dealt with it:

So far from annulling any of the Ten Commandments, He [Christ] amplified their scope, teaching that an angry thought or bitter word violated the sixth, and a lustful look the seventh (Matt. 5:21, 22, 27, 28).

The teaching of the apostles under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, is even more emphatic and explicit concerning the scope and obligations of the moral law.—*Moody Bible Institute Monthly*, October, 1933.

# Distinction Between the Decalogue and the Ceremonial Law

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## QUESTION 13

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*On what grounds do Seventh-day Adventists consider as separate the "moral law" and the "ceremonial law," in view of what our Lord accomplished on Calvary's cross?*

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We feel that there are ample Biblical grounds for making this distinction. The Ten Commandments, or the Decalogue, constitute in principle God's eternal law. Not only is this law eternal, but it is immutable. It is the foundation of His throne; it is the expression of His character. Since it represents His character—or what God Himself is—we believe it is as eternal as the everlasting God.

This thought can be seen in the following qualities inherent in God and in His law:

	<i>God Is</i>		<i>His Law Is</i>
Righteous	Ezra 9:15	Righteousness	Ps. 119:172
Perfect	Matt. 5:48	Perfect	Ps. 19:7
Holy	Lev. 19:2	Holy	Rom. 7:12
Good	Ps. 34:8	Good	Rom. 7:12
Truth	Deut. 32:4	Truth	Ps. 119:142

But while this is true of the eternal law of God as expressed in the Decalogue, it would not be true of the

ceremonial law that God gave to Israel. This ceremonial law embraced the types and shadows that entered into the sacrificial system of Israel. All the sacrificial offerings, the feast days, and even the priesthood—all that was typical of the sacrifice and ministry of Christ our Lord—met its end on Calvary's cross. This we believe is what is meant by the apostle Paul when he wrote that Christ “abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances” (Eph. 2:15).

“Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross” (Col. 2:14).

“Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ” (verse 17).

The distinction between the moral law of God—the Decalogue—and the ceremonial law can be seen in the following:

#### The Decalogue

1. Spoken by God Himself. Ex. 20:1, 22.
2. Written by God. Ex. 31:18; 32:16.
3. On stones. Ex. 31:18.
4. Handed by God, its writer, to Moses. Ex. 31:18.
5. Deposited by Moses “in the ark.” Deut. 10:5.
6. Deals with moral precepts. Ex. 20:3-17.

#### The Ceremonial Law

1. Spoken by Moses. Ex. 24:3.
2. Written by Moses. Ex. 24:4; Deut. 31:9.
3. In a book. Ex. 24:4, 7; Deut. 31:24.
4. Handed by Moses, its writer, to Levites. Deut. 31:25, 26.
5. Deposited by the Levites “by the side of the ark.” Deut. 31:26, A.R.V.
6. Deals with ceremonial, ritual matters. (See parts of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.)

- 7. Reveals sin. Rom. 7:7.
- 8. Breaking of "the law" is "sin." 1 John 3:4.
- 9. Should "keep the whole law." James 2:10.
- 10. Because we "shall be judged" by this law. James 2:12.
- 11. The Christian who keeps this law is "blessed in his deed." James 1:25.
- 12. "The perfect law of liberty." James 1:25. (Cf. James 2:12.)
- 13. Established by faith in Christ. Rom. 3:31.
- 14. Christ was to "magnify the law and make it honourable." Isa. 42:21.
- 15. "We know that the law is spiritual." Rom. 7:14. (Cf. verse 7.)
- 7. Prescribes offerings for sins. (See book of Leviticus.)
- 8. No sin in breaking, for now "abolished." Eph. 2:15. ("Where no law is, there is no transgression." Rom. 4:15.)
- 9. Apostles gave "no such commandment" to "keep the law." Acts 15:24.
- 10. Not to be judged by it. Col. 2:16.
- 11. The Christian who keeps this law is not blessed. (See, for example, Gal. 5:1-6.)
- 12. The Christian who keeps this law loses his liberty. Gal. 5:1, 3.
- 13. Abolished by Christ. Eph. 2:15.
- 14. Blotted "out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us." Col. 2:14.
- 15. "The law of a carnal commandment." Heb. 7:16.

It should also be noted that the leading confessions of faith, and the historic creeds of Christendom, recognize the difference between God's moral law, the Ten Commandments, or the Decalogue, as separate and distinct from the ceremonial precepts. The following are a few of them:

*The Second Helvetic Confession* (1566), of the Reformed Church of Zurich, and one of the most authoritative of all Continental symbols (PHILIP SCHAFF, *The Creeds of Christendom*, vol. 1, pp. 391,

394, 395), in chapter 12, "Of the Law of God," after contrasting the "moral" and the "ceremonial" laws, says of the moral law, "We believe that the whole will of God, and all necessary precepts, for every part of this life, are fully delivered in this law" (not that we are to be justified by it, but that we shall turn to Christ by faith). The types and figures of the ceremonial law have ceased. "The shadow ceased when the body came," but the moral law is not to be disdained or rejected, and all teachings against the law are condemned. (See SCHAFF, vol. 3, pp. 854-856.)

*Thirty-nine Articles of Religion of the Church of England* (1571). Article VII states that while "the lawe geven from God by Moses" concerning "ceremonies and rites" is not binding, "no Christian man whatsoeuer, is free from the obedience of the commaundementes, which are called morall." (See SCHAFF, vol. 3, pp. 491, 492.)

*The American Revision of Thirty-nine Articles by the Protestant Episcopal Church* (1801) is identical with the foregoing. (See SCHAFF, vol. 3, p. 816.)

*The Irish Articles of Religion* (1615), believed to have been composed by Archbishop Ussher, after stating that the ceremonial law is abolished, says: "No Christian man whatsoever is freed from the obedience of the Commandments which are called Moral." (See SCHAFF, vol. 3, pp. 526, 541.)

*The Westminster Confession of Faith* (1647), after showing the difference between the ceremonial and the moral law, and the abrogation of the former and the perpetuity of the latter, in chapter 19 declares "the moral law doth forever bind all," not for justification,

but as a rule of life, in order to recognize the enabling power of Christ. This law continues to be "a perfect rule of righteousness." And it adds, "Neither doth Christ in the gospel any way dissolve, but much strengthen, this obligation." (See SCHAFF, vol. 3, pp. 640-644.)

*The Savoy Declaration of the Congregational Churches* (1658). There is no change in chapter 19, "Of the Law of God," from the Westminster Confession. (See SCHAFF, vol. 3, p. 718).

*Baptist Confession of 1688* (Philadelphia), based on the London, 1677, confession, has no change from the Westminster Confession in chapter 19, "Of the Law of God." It deals with the distinction between the moral and the ceremonial law, and asserts that no Christian is free from obedience to the moral law. (See SCHAFF, vol. 3, p. 738.)

*Methodist Articles of Religion* (1784). These twenty-five articles, drawn up by John Wesley for American Methodists, are an abridgement of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England, and declare: "Although the law given from God by Moses, as touching ceremonies and rites, doth not bind Christians, nor ought the civil precepts thereof of necessity be received in any commonwealth, yet, notwithstanding, no Christian whatsoever is free from the obedience to the commandments which are called moral." (See SCHAFF, vol. 3, pp. 807, 808.)

The conclusion from the foregoing is therefore clear: The position maintained by Seventh-day Adventists regarding their relationship to the Decalogue, and their distinction between the moral and the ceremonial law, is in full accordance with the teaching of the great Protestant confessions of faith.

nial law, is fully sustained by the leading creeds, articles of faith, and catechisms of historic Protestantism. The concept that the Decalogue was abolished by the death of Christ is a relatively recent one. Certainly it was not taught by the founding fathers of Protestantism, for such is in total conflict with their belief.

# The Relationship of Grace to Law and Works

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## QUESTION 14

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*It is generally understood that Adventists teach that salvation is by the grace of God—but plus the works of the law. What is the actual Adventist concept of the relation of grace to law and to human works? Is not the emphasis of Mrs. White on the necessity of works and obedience, rather than on the abounding saving grace of God?*

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There has been regrettable misunderstanding as to our teaching on grace, law, and works, and their inter-relationships. According to Seventh-day Adventist belief, there is, and can be, no salvation through the law, or by human works of the law, but only through the saving grace of God. This principle, to us, is basic. This transcendent provision of the grace of God is emphasized both in the Old and the New Testament, although the truth of God's wondrous grace reaches its fullest unfolding, and most complete manifestation, in the New Testament times and record.

### I. Grace Pre-eminent in the New Testament

The word “grace” (Greek, *charis*), occurs some 150 times in the New Testament. Paul made more use of this significant term than did any other New Testa-

ment writer, there being some 100 occurrences in his epistles. His close associate, Luke, used the word about 25 times in Luke and Acts, these two men thereby accounting for about five sixths of all the New Testament occurrences. "Grace" was by no means a new word invented by the apostles; the term was widely used in a variety of associated meanings in the LXX and in classical and later Greek literature. However, the New Testament often seems to attach a special significance to "grace" that is not found fully expressed elsewhere.

In the New Testament, grace is set forth as a distinctively divine quality. New Testament writers speak of "the grace of our God" (Jude 4); "the grace of Christ" (Gal. 1:6); and "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Gal. 6:18). Expressions like these constitute the opening and closing salutations in the letters of the apostles. They are found at the beginning of Peter's two letters, as well as in the fourteen epistles of the apostle Paul. They also appear at the close of these letters of spiritual counsel and encouragement.

This divine grace is further described by a remarkably wide range of adjectives and adverbs. It is called the "*true* grace of God" (1 Peter 5:12); *abounding*, or "*abundant*," grace (2 Cor. 4:15); the "*manifold* grace of God" (1 Peter 4:19); the "*sufficient*" grace of God (2 Cor. 12:9); the "*exceeding* grace of God" (2 Cor. 9:14). There is also the expression "grace for grace" (John 1:16); and reference to Christ Jesus our Lord as being "full of grace and truth" (John 1:14; compare verse 17). It is also the "*free gift*" of God (Rom. 5:15, 18).

## II. Bible Definition or Description of Grace

The distinctive meaning attached to the term "grace" in the New Testament, and especially in the writings of Paul, is that of the abundant, saving love of God toward sinners as revealed in Jesus Christ. Obviously, since all men have sinned and are destitute of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23), such favor and loving-kindness on God's part are wholly undeserved and unmerited by sinful man. Men have lived in hatred and rebellion against God (Rom. 1:21, 31, 32), have perverted His truth (verses 18, 25), have preferred to worship beasts and reptiles (verse 23), have defiled His image in their own bodies (verses 24-27), have blasphemed His name (Rom. 2:24), and have even despised God for His patience and forbearance (verse 4). Finally, they murdered His Son, sent to save them (Acts 7:52). Yet God has continued to regard man with love and kindness, that the revelation of His goodness may lead men to repentance (Rom. 2:4).

This is the grace of God in its peculiar New Testament sense. It is God's unlimited, all-inclusive, transforming love toward sinful men and women; and the good news of this grace, as revealed in Jesus Christ, is "the power of God unto salvation" (Rom. 1:16). It is not merely God's mercy and willingness to forgive, but it is an active, energizing, transforming power to save. Thus it may fill a person (John 1:14), it may be given (Rom. 12:3, 6), it is all-sufficient (2 Cor. 12:9; compare Rom. 5:20), it reigns (Rom. 5:21), it teaches (Titus 2:11, 12), it establishes the heart (Heb. 13:9). In some instances "grace" seems almost to be equivalent

to "gospel" (Col. 1:6) and to the working of God generally (Acts 11:23; 1 Peter 5:12). Ellen G. White wrote:

Divine grace is the great element of saving power.—*Gospel Workers*, p. 70.

Christ gave His life to make it possible for man to be restored to the image of God. It is the power of His grace that draws men together in obedience to the truth.—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 249.

The "grace of God" has been fittingly called the "love of God"; that is, love, not so much in a general sense as in a specific sense; not so much love merely as love, but love directionally. Grace is the love of God flowing—flowing not *upward* or *outward*, but *downward*. It is that wonderful divine mercy and undeserved favor that flows from the great loving heart of God. And specifically, it is His love that flows downward from heaven to undeserving sinners here on earth. While deserving nothing but the wrath of God, we become, through this marvelous grace, the recipients of this love, this grace, which we do not in the least merit.

### III. Ellen G. White on the Sovereignty of Grace

As to the apparently misunderstood teachings of Ellen G. White on the relationship of grace, law, and works, please note the following expression, written in 1905. Her writings are in pronounced harmony with Scripture, as well as sound historical theology.

Grace is an attribute of God exercised toward undeserving human beings. We did not seek for it, but it was sent in search of us. God rejoices to bestow His grace upon us, not because we are worthy, but because we are so utterly unworthy. Our only claim to His mercy is our great need.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 161.

More than that, the same writer adds that everything we enjoy, in the matchless blessings of salvation comes to us through the grace of God. Thus:

We owe everything to grace, free grace, sovereign grace. Grace in the covenant ordained our adoption. Grace in the Saviour effected our redemption, our regeneration, and our adoption to heirship with Christ.—*Testimonies for the Church* (1882), vol. 6, p. 268.

Recognized theological classics have stated these same truths in this way. Charles Hodge, formerly professor of systematic theology at Princeton Theological Seminary, declares:

The word [*charis*, “grace”] . . . means a favourable disposition, or kind feeling; and especially love as exercised toward the inferior, dependent, or unworthy. This is represented as the crowning attribute of the divine nature. Its manifestation is declared to be the grand end of the whole scheme of redemption. . . . He [God] raises men from spiritual death, “and makes them sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace.” (Eph. 2:6, 7.) Therefore it is often asserted that salvation is of grace. The gospel is a system of grace. All its blessings are gratuitously bestowed; all is so ordered that in every step of the progress of redemption and in its consummation, the grace, or undeserved love of God, is conspicuously displayed. Nothing is given or promised on the ground of merit. Everything is an undeserved favour. That salvation was provided at all, is a matter of grace and not of debt. —*Systematic Theology* (1871), vol. 2, p. 654.

With this, Adventists are in complete agreement.

#### IV. The Fruitage of This Divine Grace

Many and varied are the manifestations of the grace of God. Our heavenly Father is called “the God of all grace” (1 Peter 5:10). We may do “despite unto the Spirit of grace” (Heb. 10:29). “We have redemption . . . according to the riches of his grace” (Eph. 1:7).

We are to preach “the gospel of the grace of God” (Acts 20:24) and “the word of his grace” (Acts 14:3). We are also “chosen by grace” (Rom. 11:5, R.S.V.).

Everything we enjoy in Christian experience comes to us because of this matchless grace of God. We were “called . . . by his grace” (Gal. 1:15). We have “believed” through His grace (Acts 18:27). We were “justified by his grace” (Titus 3:7). Paul could say, “I am what I am” because of “the grace of God” (1 Cor. 15:10). We too are saved by His grace (Eph. 2:5, 8).

The grace of God gives us a unique and secure standing before God. We are to “continue in the grace of God” (Acts 13:43) and to “grow in the grace . . . of our Lord” (2 Peter 3:18, R.S.V.). As we do this, we shall “stand” in the grace of God (Rom. 5:2).

So it is the grace of Christ alone that can save the soul; this alone can lift the fallen from the depths of degradation and sin. Ellen G. White’s witness on this point is both clear and unvarying:

Divine grace is the great element of saving power; without it all human effort is unavailing.—*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students* (1882), p. 538.

Christ delights to take apparently hopeless material, those whom Satan has debased and through whom he has worked, and make them the subjects of His grace.—*Testimonies for the Church* (1882), vol. 6, p. 308.

Further, she writes that it is also the grace of God that keeps us from falling, and enables us to remain steadfast and true to the divine calling.

There is only one power that can either make us steadfast or keep us so,—the grace of God, in truth. He who confides in aught else is already tottering, ready to fall.—*Ibid.* (1902), vol. 7, p. 189.

Again, it is the grace of God, manifested in the lives of the children of God, that is the greatest argument as to the truth and power of the Christian faith.

By power of His grace manifested in the transformation of character the world is to be convinced that God has sent His Son as its Redeemer.—*The Ministry of Healing* (1905), p. 470.

And when at last the redeemed surround the throne of God, it will be by the wonderful grace of God.

If during this life they are loyal to God, they will at last “see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads.” Revelation 22:4. And what is the happiness of heaven but to see God? What greater joy could come to the sinner saved by the grace of Christ than to look upon the face of God, and know Him as Father?—*Ibid.*, p. 421.

#### V. The Relationship of Grace and Works

Salvation is not now, and never has been, by law or works; salvation is only by the grace of Christ. Moreover, there never was a time in the plan of God when salvation was by human works or effort. Nothing men can do, or have done, can in any way *merit* salvation.

While works are not a *means* of salvation, good works are the inevitable *result* of salvation. However, these good works are possible only for the child of God whose life is inwrought by the Spirit of God. It is to such believers that John writes when he bids them keep the commandments of God (1 John 3:22-24; 5:2, 3). This relationship and sequence is imperative, but is often misunderstood or reversed.

Even in the days of old, men were not justified by works; they were justified by faith. Thus the prophet Habakkuk wrote: “The just shall live by his faith” (Hab. 2:4; compare Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:8, 11; Phil. 3:9; Heb. 10:38). God calls upon man to be righteous; but

man is naturally unrighteous. If he is to be prepared for the kingdom of God, he must be made righteous. This is something man cannot do in and of himself. He is unclean and unrighteous. The more he works, and the greater his effort, the more he reveals the unrighteousness of his own heart. Therefore if man is ever to become righteous, it must be by a power entirely outside himself—it must be by the power of God.

There is really no actual valid conflict between grace and the law—the Ten Commandments; each serves its special purpose in the plan of God. Grace, as such, is not opposed to the law, which is God's standard of righteousness; neither is the law opposed to grace. Each has its specific functions, and neither trespasses on the functions of the other.

One thing is certain, man cannot be saved by any effort of his own. We profoundly believe that no works of the law, no deeds of the law, no effort however commendable, and no good works—whether they be many or few, sacrificial or not—can in any way justify the sinner (Titus 3:5; Rom. 3:20). Salvation is wholly of grace; it is the gift of God (Rom. 4:4, 5; Eph. 2:8).

Man in the beginning was made upright (Eccl. 7:29). There was no taint of sin in him when he came forth from the hand of his Creator. He was made in the image of God, and his character was in harmony with the principles of God's holy law. But man sinned. Now, in and through the gospel, it is the purpose of God to restore in man that lost image of God. He was originally sinless; now he is sinful. But when the gospel of the grace of God does its work in his heart, he will be clothed with the robe of the righteousness of

Christ. That righteousness is *imputed* to him in justification. It is *imparted* to him in sanctification. And through Christ, and Christ alone, it will be his, and his forever, in glorification.

But there are dangers against which the children of God need to guard. This too has been forcefully stated by Ellen G. White:

There are two errors against which the children of God—particularly those who have just come to trust in His grace—especially need to guard. The first . . . is that of looking to their own works, trusting to anything they can do, to bring themselves into harmony with God. He who is trying to become holy by his own works in keeping the law, is attempting an impossibility. All that man can do without Christ is polluted with selfishness and sin. It is the grace of Christ alone, through faith, that can make us holy.

The opposite and no less dangerous error is, that belief in Christ releases men from keeping the law of God; that since by faith alone we become partakers of the grace of Christ, our works have nothing to do with our redemption.

But notice here that obedience is not a mere outward compliance, but the service of love. The law of God is an expression of His very nature; it is an embodiment of the great principle of love, and hence is the foundation of His government in heaven and earth. If our hearts are renewed in the likeness of God, if the divine love is implanted in the soul, will not the law of God be carried out in the life? When the principle of love is implanted in the heart, when man is renewed after the image of Him that created him, the new covenant promise is fulfilled: "I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them." And if the law is written in the heart, will it not shape the life? Obedience—the service and allegiance of love—is the true sign of discipleship.—*Steps to Christ* (1892), pp. 64, 65.

The Lord expects no less of the soul now than He expected of man in Paradise, perfect obedience, unblemished righteousness. The requirement under the covenant of grace is just as broad as the requirement made in Eden,—harmony with God's law, which is holy, just, and good.—*Christ's Object Lessons* (1900), p. 391.

Ray C. Stedman has impressively set forth the relation of grace and law, and some common misconceptions, in the September, 1953, *Our Hope*, as follows:

If the question, "Is law opposed to grace?" were put to a representative group of evangelical believers today, the answer would be, in many instances, an emphatic "Yes." Even such a selected group as students of conservative Bible institutes and seminaries would probably give a strong affirmative to such a question. And they would be wrong! Despite their wide-eyed amazement at such a statement as this the fact remains that, biblically and theologically, they are dead wrong.

It is easy to understand why otherwise well-taught Christians are confused on this matter. No theological drum is more soundly thumped today than that of law vs. grace. No issue is more clearly drawn than that which separates the camp of the legalists from the adherents of grace. And this, of course, is pre-eminently right. What is commonly overlooked and little understood in this present day conflict between law and grace is that *the issue is not between these two principles, as such, but between the abuse of the law, on the one hand and grace on the other.*

To put the matter another way, it is only when the law is made a *means* of salvation or of restraint of sin that it comes into conflict with the principles of grace. In every other respect the two are complementary and not conflicting. But the law was never designed to save. In its essential principle it is not, and *cannot ever be, opposed to grace*, for the two operate in distinctly separate fields and for widely divergent purposes. *The law is designed to reveal sin; grace is designed to save from sin.* No conflict can possibly exist between these two.

The difference does not lie in the commandments of law *versus* the commandment-free life of grace, for the fact is that grace has its commandments too! Those who always associate the word "command" with the word "law" have failed to read the Bible accurately. After all, a command is but the expression of a desire on the part of one who has authority. If Christ is Lord of our lives, then He has authority in our lives and His requests become commands to all who love Him. These are the *commandments of grace*. The difference between them and the commandments of law lies in the motive. *Why does one obey the law? For fear! Why does one obey a command of grace? For love!*

There lies the difference. The command may be the same in either case; the motive alone differs. What made the law so irritating was the sense of constraint it engendered. We were being asked to do what we really did not want to do. The same command, in the relationship of grace, elicits a prompt and willing obedience from us because we love the One who asks it of us. The sense of constraint is utterly gone.

What happened, then, when grace superseded law? Did the desire of God for men, as expressed in the law, change? No; it was even intensified and made to be inward rather than merely outward. *What, then, changed? The motive of men's hearts!* Once we strove in vain to obey a just law, lashed on by our fears of wrath to come. Now, as believers in Christ, we stand before God in the perfect righteousness of Christ and, because we love Him who first loved us, we seek to please Him—something we find great pleasure ourselves in doing—and thus, unconsciously, fulfill the law. “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, judged sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Rom. 8:3, 4). The last clause is descriptive of what grace makes us do. (Italics supplied.)

This statement of Adventist position may well close with this admonition from Ellen G. White to our own church:

Christ is pleading for the church in the heavenly courts above, pleading for those for whom He paid the redemption price of His own lifeblood. Centuries, ages, can never diminish the efficacy of this atoning sacrifice. The message of the gospel of His grace was to be given to the church in clear and distinct lines, that the world should no longer say that Seventh-day Adventists talk the law, the law, but do not teach or believe Christ.—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 92.

A Christian poet has well said:

I would not work my soul to save,  
For that my Lord hath done;  
But I would work like any slave  
For the love of God's dear Son.



**V. Questions on the Sabbath, Sunday,  
and the Mark of the Beast**



# The Foundation of Sabbath Observance

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## QUESTION 15

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*Just what is the basis of Seventh-day Adventist observance of Saturday as the Sabbath, instead of Sunday, commonly called the Lord's day or the Christian Sabbath?*

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We believe that the Sabbath was instituted in Eden before sin entered, that it was honored of God, set apart by divine appointment, and given to mankind as the perpetual memorial of a finished creation. It was based upon the fact that God Himself had rested from His work of creation, had blessed His Sabbath, or rest day, and had sanctified it, or set it apart for man (Gen. 2:1-3; Mark 2:27). We believe, further, that it was none other than the Son of God Himself, the second person of the eternal Godhead, who was the Creator of Genesis 1:1-3, and who therefore appointed the original Sabbath (John 1:3; 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16, 17; Heb. 1:1, 2).

While the Sabbath is enshrined in the very heart of the commandments of God, it must be remembered that Jesus said, "The Son of man is Lord also of the sabbath" (Mark 2:28). In other words, He is its author and its maker. He is its protector. The Sabbath is the "sabbath of the Lord [Jehovah] thy God" (Ex.

20:10). Hence Christ is its Lord; the Sabbath belongs to Him. It is His day; it is the Lord's day. Inasmuch as we, His blood-bought children, belong to Him and live in Him, and He lives in us (Gal. 2:20), how natural that Sabbath observance, among other expressions of love and loyalty to Him, should be revealed in our lives.

We understand that the Sabbath was not initially given simply to provide rest from physical exhaustion, but was for man's highest good—spiritually, intellectually, and physically. It was primarily for fellowship with God, inasmuch as it is the presence of God that gives rest and makes holy. But after man's fall, it also provided needful physical rest as well.

Many centuries later, the *weekly* seventh-day Sabbath was reaffirmed at Sinai (Ex. 20:8-11; 31:16, 17). God gave His chosen people an organized system of worship. This Sabbath precept was placed in the midst of the moral law, or Ten Commandments, which were given by God to man. The law enunciated principles that are eternal and that, in their application to this earth, are based upon the abiding relationships of man to God and man to man. The Sabbath thus reminds man of Christ's work as Creator, Preserver, Benefactor, and now, because of sin, as Redeemer.

In addition, certain *yearly* festivals, or ceremonial sabbaths, falling on *specified days of the month* and connected with the Mosaic sacrificial services, were introduced. These prefigured the gospel provision of salvation through the coming "Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). But the Decalogue, sealed with the lip and finger of God,

was lifted above all Jewish rites and ceremonies. This is evident from the fact that the Sabbath was established before man sinned, and therefore before he had any need of a Redeemer. It was *not* a part of the ceremonial regulations occasioned by the entrance of sin, and which were annulled by the death of Christ (Col. 2:17). Thus the Ten Commandments and the gospel in figure, in inseparable union, were affirmed to Israel of old.

So the Sabbath, established in Eden, was kept by patriarch, prophet, and people of God throughout the centuries of pagan darkness. And when Christ came, at His incarnation, He likewise observed the seventh day as the Sabbath (Mark 6:1, 2; Luke 4:16, 31), and was "Lord also of the sabbath" (Mark 2:28)—the Creator who had established the original seventh-day Sabbath of creation week.

He also fulfilled, in antitypical reality, the Old Testament types of redemption—dying as the "Lamb of God," a vicarious, completely efficacious, and atoning death for man, on the specified fourteenth (or Passover) day of the first month. The Saviour died, we believe, on the sixth day of the week. Then, after remaining in the tomb over the seventh-day Sabbath, Christ rose triumphant over death on the first day of the week. The typical ceremonial system ceased when Christ completed His great redemptive act. But the Decalogue and the gospel-in-actuality remained as the Christian's continuing guide, one setting forth the standard, and the other providing the enabling power for its observance.

The texts in the New Testament specifically men-

tioning the first day of the week (Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:1, 2, 9; Luke 24:1; John 20:1, 19; Acts 20:7, 8; 1 Cor. 16:1, 2) cannot rightly be construed as enjoining the observance of Sunday, or as transferring the Sabbath from the seventh day to the first day.

The seventh-day Sabbath continued to be kept by Christ's followers for several centuries. But along with the Sabbath there was a growing observance of what was known as the festival of the resurrection, celebrated on the first day. This was observed at least from the middle of the second century (see Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History*, V. 22). And the first recorded observance was at Rome (Justin Martyr, *First Apology*, ch. 67).

Thus these two observances—the Sabbath and the “festival of the resurrection”—came, in time, to parallel each other. In the fourth century the apostatizing church—first, at the Council of Laodicea (in canon 29)\*—anathematized those who continued to “Judaize,” or rest on the seventh day of the week, and decreed the observance of the first day in its stead (Hefele, *History of the Councils of the Church*, vol. 2, p. 316). Thus ecclesiastical custom was first enforced by church council action.

Seventh-day Adventists believe that this very change was predicted in Bible prophecy, in Daniel 7:25. The church in Rome led out in bringing about the change to Sunday. Thenceforth Sunday was observed by most Christians, before, during, and following the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century. The Sab-

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\*The canons of the provincial Council of Laodicea were incorporated into the law of the church by action of the general Council of Chalcedon, in 451, and thus became obligatory for all churches.

bath, however, still continued to be observed by some in various parts of Europe and elsewhere.

The revival of seventh-day Sabbath observance was largely brought about in the seventeenth century by the Seventh Day Baptist movement in Britain and on the Continent. Seventh-day Adventists began the promulgation of the Sabbath truth about 1845-46 in America.

We believe that the restoration of the Sabbath is indicated in the Bible prophecy of Revelation 14:9-12. Sincerely believing this, we regard the observance of the Sabbath as a test of our loyalty to Christ as Creator and Redeemer.

Seventh-day Adventists do not rely upon their Sabbathkeeping as a *means* of salvation or of winning merit before God. We are saved by grace alone. Hence our Sabbath observance, as also our loyalty to every other command of God, is an expression of our love for our Creator and Redeemer.

# The Sabbath and the Moral Law

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## QUESTION 16

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*The Christian world generally holds (1) that the moral law is eternal and has not been abolished; (2) that the Sabbath principle, anchored to the creation week, especially in the distinction between the six-and-one days—marking them off by divine authority for different purposes—is likewise permanent and eternal; (3) that the specific seventh-day time element is but ceremonial and typical, and therefore temporary—being fulfilled and abrogated by Christ at the cross; and (4) that there is a clear continuity between the Sabbath of Old Testament times, based on creation, and the Lord's day of the New Testament, based on redemption, with the redemption rest greater than the creation rest. What is the position of Seventh-day Adventists on these four points?*

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Seventh-day Adventists are in full accord with point 1—that the moral law is eternal in its very nature and has not been abrogated. We believe that these eternal moral principles are unchanged and unchangeable. We further believe that these basic principles are found in the Decalogue—Ten Commandments, or the moral law.

We believe that the moral law in its original form, though the wording has not been recorded, finds comprehensive expression in the principles set forth by Jesus—loving God supremely and loving our fellow men equally with ourselves. These primary principles are the foundation of God's throne, and the eternal law of His beneficent moral government.

We also believe that it is this moral law—the Decalogue—that reveals sin: “By the law is the knowledge of sin” (Rom. 3:20); “Where no law is, there is no transgression” (Rom. 4:15); “I had not known sin, but by the law” (Rom. 7:7); and “Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law” (1 John 3:4).

It was the outbreak of sin in Eden, the transgression of the divine law, that made the plan of redemption necessary. Because of man's sin the Saviour died a vicarious, atoning death on Calvary to save lost man. Hence, the moral law and the gospel are inseparably related. One reveals the sin; the other, the Redeemer who saves from sin.

We are also in agreement with most of point 2—that the Sabbath springs from creation week, and is likewise permanent and eternal. The “six-and-one day” expression, from which we dissent, will be discussed later. But on the basis of the fundamental Protestant principle that the Bible is the Christian's sole rule of faith and practice, we believe that the contention of point 3—that while the moral nature of the Sabbath as an institution is permanent, its specific time element was only ceremonial and temporary, and thus lapsed at the cross—is inconsistent as a corollary argument. We

likewise reject the implication that while the moral aspect of the Sabbath is firmly anchored in creation, its time element is not.\*

Nowhere in the teachings of Jesus do we find any declaration to the effect that this time element, or *seventh-day-ness* (if we may so term it), of the Sabbath command has been changed. We have not found any questioning of the validity of this *seventh-day-ness* on the part of Jesus, or any relaxation of the obligation of its *seventh-day-ness*, but rather an implicit recognition of its continuance.

1. POINTS OF AGREEMENT AND DIFFERENCE.—Adventists believe that the seventh-day Sabbath—which was “made for man” (Mark 2:27)—was given to “man” (i.e., mankind) in Eden, long before the Hebrew people came into being. And it was observed throughout the patriarchal age, long before it was placed in the special custody of ancient Israel, following their exodus from Egypt.†

The principles of the moral law were, we believe,

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\*Some think of the Sabbath as an institution related only to the Hebrews. Those who press this point claim that the Deuteronomy version of the Decalogue emphasizes that the Sabbath was given exclusively to the Hebrews, because they had been delivered from slavery.

†The silence of the latter part of Genesis regarding the Sabbath is understandable when one remembers that acquaintance of the patriarchs with God’s commandments was taken for granted. The author of the historical record in Genesis did not deem it necessary to mention it in his sweeping survey of the centuries. But Abraham kept the commandments of God (Gen. 26:5)—the Hebrew word here used for “commandments” being the same as that used for the Decalogue in Deuteronomy 5:10, 29. Kalisch mentions this as the law written in the heart of man, and the *Pulpit Commentary* states that the word means “that which is graven on tables.” Abraham acknowledged and obeyed the moral law of God. If so, would that not include the Sabbath? The *Companion Bible* (Gen. 26:5) says Abraham had a *charge*, to be observed; *commandments*, to be obeyed; *statutes* (decrees), to be acknowledged; and *laws* (“instruction,” the *Torah*), to be followed.

And during their wilderness experience, God tested His ancient people as to whether they would walk in the way of His commandments (Ex. 16:4). The test came on the subject of the Sabbath. And comparison of Exodus 16:1 with Exodus 19:1 shows that this occurred several weeks before the promulgation of the Decalogue. They must, therefore, have known not only of God’s law but also of specific commandments embraced therein, as evidenced by this reference to the Sabbath.

known to man before the Fall,\* and were later committed to written form in the Decalogue, amid the awesome scenes of Sinai—spoken and written by God (Exodus 19 and 20; 32:15, 16). And we believe that when Israel became God's special covenant people, pledging to honor Him in keeping His commandments, the Decalogue was given as the basis of that covenant.

We dissent, however, from the contention in point 4 of "continuity"—transfer of the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath to the festival of the resurrection, on the first day of the week. We believe the basis of the two observances to be totally different—in the first, it was to commemorate the rest of the Creator; in the second, to commemorate the resurrection of our Lord.

We dissent from the suggestion that the seventh-day Sabbath of the Old Testament had only a ceremonial significance, or was in any way "fulfilled and abrogated by Christ," or that the *seventh-day-ness* is an "abrogated" aspect or "temporary" feature of the abiding Sabbath of the fourth commandment.

We dissent from the change of the original wording—the "six days" and "the seventh day," of the fourth commandment of Exodus 20—to the unbiblical expression "six-and-one days," or a mere proportion of time, for to us such a change of phrasing involves a definite change of intent to which we cannot agree.

We dissent from the proposition that the Lord Jesus Christ transferred the observance from the last day of the week to the first in order to point beyond the original "creation rest" to a greater "redemption rest."

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\*At his creation Adam was untainted by sin. God "made man upright" (Eccl. 7:29). Man was created "in the image of God" (Gen. 1:27). That being so, the moral law would be written in his heart.

We find no scriptural evidence to sustain such a claim.

The Biblical and historical reasons for our views follow.

2. MEMORIAL IN CHARACTER, NOT CEREMONIAL.— All Seventh-day Adventists, as creationists, believe in the Genesis record of a fiat creation (Gen. 1:1 to 2:2), with the seventh day as God's recorded and attested rest day, and the Sabbath given as the perpetual memorial of that creation, blessed and sanctified (or set apart) for man. The Sabbath had its inception *before sin entered the world* (Genesis 2 and 3), and it was given to commemorate a completed creation. If sin had not entered, all would have kept the original Sabbath day.

God did not make man in order that he might keep the Sabbath (Mark 2:27). But having made man, He gave him the Sabbath as a continual reminder and memorial of the mighty power of the Creator. And while the principle of the Sabbath includes both physical and spiritual rest, a memorial cannot be spiritualized away, and does not expire with the lapse of time.

Inasmuch, then, as the Sabbath was instituted at creation, before the entrance of sin, it was an inseparable part of God's original plan and provision for man. It did not, therefore, have any ceremonial significance by foreshadowing something to come. On the contrary, it has ever had a commemorative significance, for it points back to something already done—the creation of the world and the human race.

Our observance of the seventh-day Sabbath is an expression of our belief that Christ created the world. And it is also a sign of our love, loyalty, and devotion to

Him as our Maker and King. The further fact that the Lord of the Sabbath so loved us that He became man and sacrificed His life to save us from sin's ruin, makes His Sabbath all the more precious and glorious as the Lord's day.

We believe that at His incarnation Jesus Christ came to reveal the perfect character and will and love of God, and to vindicate and fulfill the righteousness of His moral law and government. In this way Christ's perfect obedience and righteousness is first imputed (through justification) and then imparted (through sanctification) to all who accept His atoning death in their stead. Provision was thus made for His perfect Sabbathkeeping to cover all our Sabbathbreaking—as well as the infraction of the nine other precepts of the Ten Commandments.

3. MORAL AND CEREMONIAL SABBATHS BASICALLY DIFFERENT.—We believe that a sharp and fundamental distinction has been made between the *weekly* seventh-day Sabbath of the Lord, and the seven *annual* ceremonial or typical sabbaths of the tabernacle ritual (Passover, Pentecost, Day of Atonement, et cetera). These annual sabbaths each fell on a specified day of the month, not on a specific day of the week, and only occasionally coincided with the seventh-day Sabbath.

We believe that these *annual typical sabbaths*, with their special sacrificial offerings, all pointed forward to the one all-encompassing and all-sufficient offering of Jesus Christ as “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). The Scripture states that He is our Passover (1 Cor. 5:7). His death occurred on the designated day of the Passover (Nisan

14), which in that year fell on a Friday. His resurrection took place on the day of the wave sheaf, or first fruits (Nisan 16), when, as the “firstfruits” of them that slept (1 Cor. 15:20, 23), He arose triumphant over death. These tremendous events assure us of our acceptance in Him, and of our resurrection at the last day. These typical annual sabbaths ended forever at the cross, when all types met their complete antitype. *But this in no way affected the seventh-day Sabbath, which was never a type, and consequently was not abrogated.*

4. SABBATH NOT ABROGATED BY CHRIST.—The Sabbath of the fourth commandment had no *ceremonial* or *typical significance* that could be either “fulfilled” or “abrogated” in Christ. It was not instituted as part of the tabernacle ritual at Sinai, and did not point *forward* to the atoning sacrifice of Christ on Calvary. Instead, the Sabbath remained the established memorial of the original creation, hence pointed *back* to the work of the Creator. And this, by its very nature, could be neither fulfilled nor abrogated as long as His work of creation stands.

The Jewish traditions which encrusted Sabbath observance were indeed swept away by Christ—not because He fulfilled them by His antitypical, sacrificial death, but because they were simply the unauthorized “traditions of men” that had never had any validity. So it was the many *added* rules and rabbinical regulations pertaining to the observance of the Sabbath—the encumbrances—that were swept away by the teachings of Christ. *But this involved only the appendages, not the Sabbath itself.*

Isaiah prophesied that Christ would magnify the law and make it honorable (Isa. 42:21). This He did. And He magnified the Sabbath of that law, by showing it to be not a day of burden and restriction but a day of rest and release from the burdens of sin and its consequences. He observed the Sabbath throughout His life and ministry, but exemplified what true Sabbathkeeping means—showing that it was lawful to do good on the Sabbath, and on occasion healing the sick on the Sabbath.

There were, moreover, the *civil* laws of Israel, given when the nation was under a theocracy. Some of these were related to the Sabbath, and entailed severe civil penalties for desecration of the seventh day, such as capital punishment for presumptuously picking up sticks on the Sabbath (Ex. 31:14; 35:2, 3; Num. 15: 32-36). But these ended forever with the cessation of the theocracy of Israel, and were in no way transferred from, or continued beyond, that period.

Seventh-day Adventists hold the Sabbath to be for all the world and for all time. We firmly believe that there is nothing of a ceremonial or typical nature in the Sabbath of the fourth commandment.

5. “SEVENTH-DAY-NESS” AND “SABBATH-NESS” OF THE SABBATH.—Two characteristics stand out conspicuously in connection with the original Sabbath institution, which, for convenience, may be termed its *seventh-day-ness* and its *sabbath-ness*—that is, *the specific time* set apart, and *the nature of the observance*, rest from labor. As before noted, the entire ceremonial system was instituted *after* sin entered the world, with the specific purpose of pointing sinners forward to the coming Saviour.

It was designed to inculcate faith in His power to save them from their sins. But nowhere do the Scriptures state, or even imply, that the time element of the original Sabbath command was ceremonial. On the contrary, they provide explicit evidence that its *seventh-day-ness* could not have been ceremonial, for to be ceremonial and typical the time element would have to be instituted after the entrance of sin, and the consequent need of a Saviour.

The Sabbath command gives as the very reason for its existence that "in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it" (Ex. 20:11). The *seventh-day-ness* of the Sabbath is therefore no less surely anchored to creation than the moral quality that may be called its *sabbath-ness*. And our recognition of the one should be just as great as that of the other. To this undeniable fact testifies the seven-day week, which comes down to us from the time of creation (see Gen. 2:1-3).

God instituted the Sabbath on the *seventh day* of the first week of time. Thus both aspects of the day—its *seventh-day-ness* no less than its *sabbath-ness*—are inseparably linked with creation. Except for some explicit statement of Scripture in evidence to the contrary, to affirm the one and deny the other is clearly inconsistent with the major premises we have surveyed, especially in view of the Protestant position on the supreme authority of Scripture.

There was nothing ceremonial, or typical, about the several acts of creation, or about God's resting from His work of creation, or about the fact that He chose to do

so on the seventh day of creation week. Thus the Scriptures nowhere so much as imply that the *seventh-day-ness* of the Sabbath ever pointed forward to the cross. And only those things that pointed forward *to* the cross were abolished *at* or *by* the cross. The seventh-day-ness of the Sabbath was not one of those.

6. THE LOGIC OF THE CASE.—The *seventh-day-ness* of the Sabbath is frequently referred to by some as a “temporary” feature, for Old Testament times and the Hebrews only. But in view of the foregoing evidence, it is proper to ask, If it is claimed that God’s resting on the seventh day implied a “temporary” feature, then would not the same argument apply to the fact that He rested at all? What is there more “temporary” about the fact that God chose to rest on the *seventh day* of creation week than about the fact that He *rested at all*?

Another common contention pertaining to this *seventh-day-ness* of the Sabbath is that to observe the Sabbath on the seventh day of the week involves the observer in legalism. But we ask, In precisely what way, and on what scriptural authority, can regard for the *seventh-day-ness* of the Sabbath be declared to involve us automatically in legalism? Was God legalistic because He chose to rest on the seventh day of creation week, rather than upon the first day of the week, at its outset; or—interrupting His work of creation—to rest upon some other day part way through the week? And if it was not legalistic for God so to rest, why then is it legalistic for us to do so under His bidding? And if it is legalistic for us to rest on the seventh day of the week, why is it not as legalistic to rest on the first day, or any other day, of the week?

And where does the Bible either explicitly affirm, or even imply, that the *sabbath-ness* (or sheer rest) of the Sabbath is *not* legalistic, but that the *seventh-day-ness*, or rest on the particular seventh day, *is* legalistic? Again, did God institute a ceremonial, or typical, side of the Sabbath by choosing to rest on the specific seventh day? Then by what process of logic can it be maintained that it is ceremonial for us to observe the Sabbath on the seventh day of the week, but not for God to do so?

Moreover, it is sometimes affirmed that the essential purpose (the *sabbath-ness*) of the Sabbath was in harmony with the preservation and maintenance of life. Does that imply that there is a necessary conflict between the *seventh-day-ness* of the Sabbath and the preservation and maintenance of life? But in what way was the *seventh-day-ness* of the Sabbath any more in conflict with the preservation and maintenance of life than its *sabbath-ness*? The *sabbath-ness* of the Sabbath restricts activity on a specified day, while the *seventh-day-ness* of the Sabbath simply specifies on which day this is to take place.

It is also said that the *sabbath-ness* of the Sabbath existed for the *good* of man, implying that its *seventh-day-ness* operates against his well-being. But in what way does the *seventh-day-ness* of the Sabbath militate against the good of man, any more than does Sunday, the first day of the week? Did God's emphasis on the *seventh-day-ness* of the world's first Sabbath militate against the good of the Creator?

To sum up: We protest against the fallacious reasoning that would make it legalistic to observe the

seventh day of the week but not legalistic to observe the first day of the week. Such lines of reasoning as these that have been referred to in the foregoing discussion are inconsistent with sound logic. To be consistent, it would seem that one should either follow through, to their logical conclusions, the accepted major premises of points 1 and 2, by acknowledging the divinely instituted *seventh-day-ness*, as well as the *sabbath-ness*, of the Sabbath, or else retreat from the declared major premises and find another basis for retention of the moral quality of the Sabbath. Otherwise, such a course would seem to lead either to the position that the Ten Commandments have been abolished, or to the Roman Catholic position that the church has the authority and power to alter the Decalogue.

7. “SIX-AND-ONE-DAY” POSTULATE UNTENABLE.— We dissent from the position implied in point 2 of the question at the beginning of this discussion, that moral significance attaches to the distinction of the “six-and-one-day” proportion principle—or merely one *unspecified* day in seven as the Sabbath—but not to the keeping of the day designated in Scripture. We believe such a contention to be subjective reasoning, unsupported by the wording of the fourth commandment, or by any other command or sanction of Scripture. We adhere to the Protestant principle of the Bible and the Bible only, and ask for scriptural evidence for such a change from the express wording and obvious intent of Holy Writ.

And the implication that the “six-and-one-day” principle—or simply one day in seven—is admittedly inseparable from the moral essence of the Sabbath,

while specification of the *seventh* day as such reduces it to a ceremonial relationship, is, we believe, neither Biblically sound nor logically true. There is nothing whatsoever in the specific seventh-day Sabbath that has ceremonial significance in the life and work of Christ, and consequently affords any basis for being so considered. We take the fourth commandment without emendations.

8. INTRODUCTION OF SUNDAY OBSERVANCE.—Turning now to the historical side, we dissent, first of all, from the thesis that the Sabbath has actually been transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week, called the “Lord’s day” by many. The earliest authentic instance, in early church writings, of the first day of the week being called “Lord’s day” was by Clement of Alexandria, near the close of the second century (see *Miscellanies* v. 14). And the first ecclesiastical writer known definitely to teach that the observance of the Sabbath was transferred by Christ to Sunday was Eusebius of Caesarea (died c. 349), who made the allegation in his *Commentary on the Psalms*, on Psalm 92 (Psalm 91 in K.J.V), written in the second quarter of the fourth century. (See Frank H. Yost, *The Early Christian Sabbath*, 1947, ch. 5.)

Sunday observance as a church festival commemorating Christ’s resurrection—but as supplementary to, and not in lieu of, the Sabbath—was introduced at Rome about the middle of the second century. The custom spread gradually from that time onward. Although the Christians in Rome generally fasted instead of celebrating communion on Sabbath days, Ambrose, bishop of Milan (375-397), refused to follow this

practice in his diocese (Ambrose *De Elia et Jejunio* 10; Paulinus *Life of St. Ambrose* 38; Augustine *Epistle* 36. 14 to Casulanus; *Epistle* 54. 2 to Januarius).

Augustine, bishop of Hippo (died 430), stated that while the church of Rome fasted on the seventh day of each week in his time, the practice was not generally followed elsewhere in Italy, making special mention of Ambrose's refusal at Milan. He added that the vast majority of the Christian churches throughout the world, particularly in the East, had too much respect for the Sabbath to do that. He likewise stated that while some churches in North Africa followed Rome's example in fasting on Sabbath days, others under his care did not. (Augustine *Epistle* 36. 14 to Casulanus; *Epistle* 54. 2 to Januarius; and *Epistle* 82 to Jerome.)

Church historian Socrates (*Ecclesiastical History* v. 22), writing about A.D. 430, left the record:

Almost all Churches throughout the world celebrate the sacred mysteries on the sabbath [seventh day] of every week, yet the Christians of Alexandria and at Rome, on account of some ancient tradition, refuse to do this.

Socrates also wrote that the Arians similarly held their meetings on both Sabbath and Sunday (*ibid.* vi. 8). And fifth-century church historian Sozomen (*Ecclesiastical History* vii. 19), confirmed Socrates' statement, declaring:

The people of Constantinople, and of several other cities, assemble together on the sabbath, as well as on the next day; which custom is never observed at Rome, or Alexandria.

After the enactment of Constantine's first civil Sunday law, in 321, enforcing "the venerable day of the sun" by rest from labor—designed to sustain and en-

force already existing ecclesiastical legislation regarding Sunday observance—the Sunday festival became increasingly popular and widespread with the passing of the centuries. It was buttressed thereafter by increasing ecclesiastical and civil legislation. However, at the time of the great schism between the churches of the East and West, in 1054, one of the principal issues of controversy was Rome's practice of still observing the Sabbath day by fasting. The Eastern churches, even at this late date, still regarded the Sabbath too highly to do that, although Sundaykeeping was then almost universal. (Cardinal Humbert, legate of Pope Leo IX to the Greeks, *Adversus Graecorum Calumnias* [Against the Calumnies of the Greeks], in Migne's *Patrologiae Latina*, vol. 143, cols. 936, 937; see also Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, ch. 60.)

Thus the eclipse of the Sabbath by Sunday in general practice took place slowly, but with much controversy and even bloodshed, as the history of the Celtic church attests, according to Lange.\* It required centuries for Sunday to come to be regarded as the Sabbath.† And to this day in Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Polish, and a number of other languages, the seventh

\*The Sabbath was observed by the Celtic church as late as the eleventh century. (Andrew Lange, *A History of Scotland*, 1909, vol. 1, p. 96; see also William F. Skene, *Celtic Scotland*, 1877, vol. 2, p. 349.)

†Seventeenth-century Edward Brerewood, of Gresham College, London (*A Learned Treatise of the Sabbath*, 1630, p. 77), left the record:

“The ancient Sabbath did remain and was observed by the Christians of the East Church, above three hundred years after our Saviour’s death.”

This is supported by Sir William Domville (*The Sabbath: or an Examination of Six Texts*, 1849, vol. 1, p. 291), writing two centuries later:

“Centuries of the Christian era passed away before the Sunday was observed by the Christian Church as a Sabbath.”

And historian Lyman Coleman, of Lafayette College (*Ancient Christianity Amplified*, 1852, ch. 26, sec. 2), concurs with these and many other witnesses:

“Down even to the fifth century the observance of the Jewish Sabbath was continued in the Christian church, but with a rigour and solemnity gradually diminishing.”

day of the week is still called by some transliteration of the old name "Sabbath."

9. PROPHESIED CHANGE OF SABBATH.—We, as Adventists, believe there has been a wholly unauthorized, unwarranted, and presumptuous change in the Sabbath by the Catholic, or great Roman, apostasy, as prophesied by Daniel (recorded in Daniel 7, especially verses 24 and 25).\* The unblushing frankness of Rome's claim of authority and power to change even precepts of the "Ten Commandments of God" is seen in Joseph Faa di Bruno's *Catholic Belief* (1884), which has passed through many printings and various translations. On one page (page 311) are listed "*The Ten Commandments of God*," of Exodus 20, given in their shorter form, with the third (fourth) reading, "Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day." On the next page (page 312) appear "*The Commandments of the Church*," the first of which is this: "We are chiefly commanded by the Church—1. To keep the Sundays and Holydays of obligation."

That this specifically involves the substitution of Sunday for the Sabbath is seen from the explanation of the expression "Apostolical and Ecclesiastical Traditions" appearing in the authoritative "Creed of Pius IV," which was issued at the close of the Council of Trent:

That is, I admit as points of *revealed truth* what the Church declares the Apostles taught as such, whether clearly or not

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\*Even Philip Melanchthon, on the prophecy on Daniel 7:25, declared: "He [the papal Little Horn] changeth the tyme and lawes that any of the sixe worke dayes commanded of God will make them unholie and idle dayes when he lyste, or of their owne holy dayes abolished make worke dayes agen, or when they changed ye Saterday into Sondaye. . . . They have changed God's lawes and turned them into their owne tradicions to be kept above God's precepts."—*Exposition of Daniel the Prophete* (1545), tr. by George Joye, p. 119.

clearly expressed or not even mentioned in the Written Word of God: as, for instance, . . . that Sunday instead of Saturday (called the Sabbath) is to be kept holy.—*Ibid.*, p. 251.

Nothing could be plainer, or more bold.

While, as noted, the seventh-day Sabbath continued to be observed in certain areas for centuries after the cross, the festival of the resurrection came gradually to parallel and then later to overshadow it. And at the Synod of Laodicea, the predominating influence at the council anathematized those who continued to observe the seventh-day Sabbath and enjoined the observance of Sunday.\* The Sabbath-Sunday canons of this Eastern council were incorporated into the canons of the General Council of Chalcedon in 451, and thus received legislative force for the entire church.

Then, in the next century, Justinian incorporated the canons of the first four general councils (including Chalcedon and Laodicea's Canon 29) into his famous Code (*Corpus Juris Civilis*), with their infraction now punishable by civil penalties. And this remained

\*Canon 29, of the Council of Laodicea, is quoted by Hefele (*A History of the Councils of the Church*, 1896, vol. 2, p. 316) as follows:

“Christians shall not Judaize and be idle on Saturday [“Sabbath,” original], but shall work on that day; but the Lord’s day they shall especially honour, and, as being Christians, shall, if possible, do no work on that day. If, however, they are found Judaizing, they shall be shut out from Christ.”

Back in the seventeenth century William Prynne of Britain (*A Brief Polemical Dissertation concerning the true time of the Inception and Determination of the Lord’s Day-Sabbath*, 1655, pp. 33, 44), affirmed this fact:

“The seventh-day Sabbath was . . . solemnized by Christ, the Apostles, and Primitive Christians . . . till this *Laodicean Council* did in a manner quite abolish the observation of it.” “The Council of Laodicea . . . first settled the observation of the Lord’s-day.”

Three centuries later Roman Catholic catechisms still maintain that this Council had been the turning point. Thus Peter Geiermann (*The Convert’s Catechism of Catholic Doctrine*, 1910, p. 50), whose treatise received the apostolic blessing of Pius X, January 25, 1910, gives this answer:

“Q. Which is the Sabbath day?

“A. Saturday is the Sabbath day.

“Q. Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday?

“A. We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church, in the Council of Laodicea (A.D. 336), transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday.”

Some even place the date just before Nicea (325); others after Constantinople (381). Most older writers fixed on 364.

the dominant law of Europe all through the Middle Ages, until modification by the countries adopting Protestantism, where decrees of tolerance were enacted by their respective parliaments. Later this was superseded by the Code of Napoleon, after the French Revolution at the end of the eighteenth century.

We, as Seventh-day Adventists—and doubtless many in other Protestant communions—deny the validity of such a change of the Sabbath as claimed by Roman Catholics and repeatedly admitted by prominent Protestants. We believe that the seventh day continues as the changeless memorial of God's original creation; and further, that the regenerated believer in Christ who, ceasing from sin, enters into spiritual rest, can keep the Sabbath as the sign of his re-creation. We therefore refuse to recognize, honor, and obey what we believe to be the papal substitute of God's unchangeable Sabbath. Taking the Bible as our sole rule of faith and practice, and unable to find Scripture warrant for such a change, we decline to follow what we believe to be the traditions and "commandments of men."

While Catholics claim responsibility for the change of the Sabbath, prominent Protestants—from Reformation times onward—admit that the change was not by scriptural authority or apostolic act, but by human churchly action. Thus:

The Augsburg Confession of 1530, Art. XXVIII, declares:

They [the Catholics] allege the change of the Sabbath into the Lord's day, contrary, as it seemeth, to the Decalogue; and they have no example more in their mouths than the change of the Sabbath. They will needs have the Church's power to be

very great, because it hath dispensed with a precept of the Decalogue.—PHILIP SCHAFF, *The Creeds of Christendom*, vol. 3, p. 64.

German church historian, Johann August Neander, in *The History of the Christian Religion and Church*, Roses' translation (1831), volume 1, page 186, asserts:

The festival of Sunday, like all other festivals, was always only a human ordinance, and it was far from the intentions of the apostles to establish a divine command in this respect, far from them, and from the early apostolic church, to transfer the laws of the Sabbath to Sunday.

English Congregationalist Robert W. Dale, in *The Ten Commandments* (1891), page 100, says:

The Sabbath was founded on a specific Divine command. We can plead no such command for the obligation to observe Sunday.

Anglican Dr. Isaac Williams, in *Plain Sermons on the Catechism* (1882), volume 1, page 336, admits:

The reasons why we keep the first day of the week holy instead of the seventh is for the same reason that we observe many other things, not because the Bible, but because the church, has enjoined it.

American Congregationalist Lyman Abbott, in *Christian Union*, June 26, 1890, states:

The current notion that Christ and his Apostles authoritatively substituted the first day of the week for the seventh is absolutely without any authority in the New Testament.

British Anglican Dean F. W. Farrar, in *The Voice From Sinai* (1892), page 167, says:

The Christian Church made no formal, but a *gradual* and almost unconscious, transference of the one day to the other.

Anglican Canon Eyton, of Westminster, in *The Ten Commandments* (1894), page 62, adds:

There is no word, no hint, in the New Testament about abstaining from work on Sunday.

N. Summerbell, in *History of the Christians*, page 418, avers:

It [the Roman Catholic Church] has *reversed* the fourth commandment, doing away with the Sabbath of God's Word, and instituting Sunday as a holy day.

And Statesman William E. Gladstone, four times prime minister of Britain, in *Later Gleanings*, page 342, observes:

The seventh day of the week has been deposed from its title to obligatory religious observance, and its prerogative has been carried over to the first; under no direct precept of Scripture.

**10. SABBATH CHANGED BY “AUTHORITY” OF ROMAN CHURCH.**—The Papacy's formal answer to Protestantism was given at the Council of Trent (1545-1563). It was here that her deliberate and final rejection, and anathema, of the Reformation teachings on the supremacy of the Bible, and other clear doctrines of the Word of God, took place. The real issue was the equality, or actual superiority, of tradition to the Scriptures as a rule of faith.

During the seventeenth session, Cardinal Casper del Fosso, archbishop of Reggio, on January 18, 1562, asserted that tradition is the outgrowth of continual churchly inspiration residing in the Catholic Church. He appealed to the long-established change of the Sabbath into Sunday as standing proof of the inspired authority of the Roman Church. He declared that the change had not been made by command of Christ, but by the authority of the Catholic Church, which change Protestants accept. His speech was the determining factor in the decision of the Council. And ever since Trent, the change of the Sabbath to Sunday has

been pointed to by Roman Catholics as the evidence of the church's power to change even the Decalogue. (See epitomizing Creed of Pius IV in Joseph Faa di Bruno, *Catholic Belief*, 1884, pp. 250-254; Henry Schroeder [tr.] *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, 1937.

11. WHY WE OBSERVE THE SABBATH.—We believe that Protestants are on perilous ground when they unwittingly follow the same subtle Sabbath argument advanced in the Council of Trent, as recorded in the *Catechism of the Council of Trent* (*Catechismus Romanus*). In this it is held that while the *Sabbath principle* is moral and eternal, the *specific time element* is only ceremonial and temporary. And further, that as the seventh day constituted the temporary time emphasis for the Jews of Old Testament times, so the Catholic mother-church, in the plenitude of her delegated power, authority, and insight, and as the designated custodian and only infallible interpreter of tradition and truth, has transferred the solemnity from the seventh to the first day of the week. (Donovan, *Catechism of the Council of Trent*, 1867, pp. 340, 342; see also Labbe and Cossart, *Sacrosancta Concilia*; Fra Paolo Sarpi, *Histoire du concile de Trente*, vol. 2; H. J. Holtzmann, *Canon and Tradition*; T. A. Buckley, *A History of the Council of Trent*; et cetera.)

In making this effective, most Roman Catholic catechisms reduce the Sabbath commandment simply to read, "Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day" (e.g., Geiermann's *The Convert's Catechism of Catholic Doctrine*, p. 50; Butler's *Catechism*, p. 28; et cetera). And in various vernacular catechisms the Sabbath com-

mand actually reads, "Remember to keep the festivals," or "feasts," instead of "Remember to keep holy the Sabbath."

The Roman Church upbraids and challenges the sincerity of Protestants who, professing to follow the Bible as their sole rule of faith and practice, in reality accept and follow the authority and example of Catholic tradition.\*

On the contrary, we as Adventists believe that Jesus Christ Himself—who was the Creator of all things (John 1:3, 10; 1 Cor. 8:6) and the original maker of the Sabbath, and who is "the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever" (Heb. 13:8)—made no change in the Sabbath. And He authorized no change to be made by His followers. We therefore believe that until the Sabbath law is repealed by divine authority, and its change made known by definite Scripture mandate, we should solemnly "remember" and "keep" the unrepealed original seventh-day Sabbath of the Decalogue, which is explicitly on record.

We believe, without any reservations, that the Sab-

\*Thus French prelate Mgr. Louis de Segur (*Plain Talk About the Protestantism of Today*, 1868, p. 213, with imprimatur by Johannes Josephus), declares:

"It was the Catholic Church which, by the authority of Jesus Christ, has transferred this rest to the Sunday in remembrance of the resurrection of our Lord. Thus the observance of *Sunday* by the Protestants is an homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the [Catholic] Church."

The *Catholic Mirror*, official organ of James Cardinal Gibbons (Sept. 23, 1893), in a series of four editorials, similarly asserted:

"The Catholic Church for over one thousand years before the existence of a Protestant, by virtue of her divine mission, changed the day from Saturday to Sunday."

"The Protestant world at its birth [the sixteenth century Reformation] found the Christian Sabbath too strongly intrenched to run counter to its existence; it was therefore placed under the necessity of acquiescing in the arrangement, thus implying the Church's right to change the day, for over three hundred years. The Christian Sabbath is therefore to this day the acknowledged offspring of the Catholic Church as spouse of the Holy Ghost, without a word of remonstrance from the Protestant world."

(See also James Cardinal Gibbons, *The Faith of Our Fathers*, 1893, p. 111; J. I. von Döllinger, *The First Age of Christianity and the Church*, vol. 2, pp. 206, 207.)

bath is the memorial of an immutable historical fact—a finished creation, and the Creator's rest on the specific seventh day at the close of creation week. We say it humbly, but we believe that nothing—no person, or group, or power on earth—can change the commemorative, historical fact that God rested on the seventh day of creation week and gave His rest day to mankind as the perpetual memorial-reminder of a finished work—never repealed, and never to be repealed.

And we believe, furthermore, that the Sabbath will ever be the eternal memorial of God's creative power and righteousness (Isa. 66:22, 23), and will remain the everlasting reminder of His justice and sovereign government, as well as of His wondrous plan of redemption and the re-creation of man through the wonders of His grace.

# Saturday Observance a Valid Criterion

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## QUESTION 17

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*Do Seventh-day Adventists believe that Saturday is the only valid criterion for determining full obedience to the law of God, or can one worship sincerely on Sunday, but fail to keep the Sabbath, and still be counted a faithful and obedient Christian?*

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Seventh-day Adventists can not, and do not, read hearts; that is God's prerogative. We believe in advancing light. Time, circumstance, knowledge, understanding, and conviction are determining factors. And we believe, further, that at stated times there is a special "present truth" due for emphasis (2 Peter 1:12).

We likewise believe that light is to increase "more and more unto the perfect day" (Prov. 4:18), and that increasing knowledge and understanding unavoidably carry with them increasing responsibility (John 9:41). "To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin" (James 4:17). Repudiation of recognized light then becomes a matter for which one is responsible. "While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light" (John 12:36). "Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you"

(verse 35). “Take heed therefore that the light which is in thee be not darkness. If thy whole body therefore be full of light, having no part dark, the whole shall be full of light, as when the bright shining of a candle doth give thee light” (Luke 11:35, 36).

As to the question itself, it should be noted:

When Sunday observance shall be enforced by law, and the world shall be enlightened concerning the obligation of the true Sabbath, then whoever shall transgress the command of God, to obey a precept which has no higher authority than that of Rome, will thereby honor popery above God.—*The Great Controversy*, p. 449.

We recognize that the Sabbath was not a test in medieval times. And we do not believe that it was a test in the days of the great sixteenth-century Reformation, or even in Wesley’s day. But in these “last days,” when, we believe, all truth is to be restored before Christ’s second coming, and the message with divine import is to come to mankind on the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, there is a moral accountability for obedience on the part of those to whom light and conviction have come. God surely does not hold men accountable for truth that has not yet come to their knowledge and understanding.

# Historic Concept of the Mark of the Beast

## QUESTION 18

*Why do Adventists differ from other Christians in connecting the mark of the beast with the Sabbath issue? And why do you put so much emphasis on this question?*

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Seventh-day Adventists believe that Bible prophecies predict a resurgence of papal power, with legal enforcement of its mark of authority, in the last days. That, we understand, is when the "mark of the beast" will be imposed—in connection with the last great religious crisis affecting all mankind (Rev. 13:16, 17). That is why Seventh-day Adventists have such deep convictions concerning the Sabbath as a coming test.

First, we are not alone in our deep convictions concerning the Sabbath. Numerous Baptist scholars, back in the seventeenth century, were so concerned over this question of the Sabbath that, after painstaking investigation, they founded the Seventh Day Baptist Church, not a few suffering imprisonment for their faith.

Nor are we either isolated or unique in connecting the mark with some form of subserviency to the Papacy, of submission to its powers, laws, pressures, and mandates. We find Christian scholars of various lands and

races who studied and wrote on the question. For centuries Christians pondered this coming mark, and had inklings of its intent. Note them:

From the time of Wycliffe's associate, John Purvey, onward, men have felt that the mark of the beast had to do with the Papacy, and pertained to papal power and decrees. Andreas Osiander (died 1552), Reformation pastor at Nürnberg, said that it was subserviency to the Papacy. Luther's associate, Nikolaus von Amsdorf (died 1565), of Magdeburg, thought it had to do with enforced papal ceremonies and decrees.

Heinrich Bullinger (died 1575), Zwingli's successor at Zurich, took it to be the Papacy's excommunicating power. Bishop Nicholas Ridley, of England (martyred in 1555), declared it involved allegiance to the beast. Scottish mathematician Sir John Napier (died 1617) defined it as a profession of obedience to Rome. Pietist Johann Lucius (died 1686) believed it to be the confession of the Roman religion. And Sir Isaac Newton (died 1727) placed the mark of the beast and the seal of God in contrast.

In Colonial America, Puritan theocrat John Cotton (died 1652) believed that those who receive the mark of the beast are the ones who receive their orders from the Church of Rome. Congregationalist Edward Holyoke (died 1660) defined it as yielding to the pope's law. Back again in England, Baptist theologian Andrew Fuller (died 1815) placed the mark of the beast and the seal of God in opposition. And to American Presbyterian minister Robert Reid (died 1844) it was submission to Roman error. Such are samplings of the historic applications of scholars covering five hun-

dred years. (All are discussed in LeRoy Edwin Froom, *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, vols. 2 and 3.) None of these expositors, of the centuries past, applied the mark of the beast specifically to the Sabbath issue, but they did connect it with the Papacy.

Sabbatarian Adventists all recognize that the Sabbath was not a test in centuries past, but believe the restoration of the Sabbath to be part of the last great revival of neglected and forsaken apostolic truths—a part that will be given emphasis in connection with God's last message in preparation of a people to meet their returning Lord.

Seventh-day Adventists believe that the prophecies of Daniel 7 and Revelation 13, relating to the beast, refer particularly to the Papacy, and that the activities and future persecuting power will come into sharp focus just before the return of our Lord in glory. It is our understanding that the Sabbath will then become a worldwide test.

Thus it was that the Adventist heralds of Sabbath reform came to make a further logical application of the mark of the beast—holding it to be, in essence, the attempted change of the Sabbath of the fourth commandment of the Decalogue by the Papacy, its endeavor to impose this change on Christendom, and the acceptance of the Papacy's substitute by individuals. We believe that in the end of time, in the light of clear divine prohibition, all men will be brought face to face with a decision to accept or reject Sunday observance. (See Question 19, "When the Mark Will Be Received.")

That the Roman Catholic Church claims the change as a mark of her authority can be seen from

the following excerpts from her catechisms. Thus Henry Tuberville, of Douay College, France, in *An Abridgment of the Christian Doctrine* (1649), page 58, three centuries ago, stated the Catholic case:

Q.—How prove you that the Church hath power to command feasts and holydays?

A.—By the very act of changing the sabbath into *Sunday*, which Protestants allow of; and therefore they fondly contradict themselves, by keeping *Sunday* strictly, and breaking most other feasts commanded by the same Church.

Stephen Keenan, in *A Doctrinal Catechism* (1865), page 174, approved by Archbishop John Hughes of New York, made a similar assertion:

Q.—*Have you any other way of proving that the Church has power to institute festivals of precept?*

A.—Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her;—she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday the seventh day, a change for which there is no Scriptural authority.

Peter Geiermann, in *The Convert's Catechism of Catholic Doctrine* (1910 ed.), page 50, repeats the claim:

Q. *Why did the Catholic Church substitute Sunday for Saturday?*

A. The Church substituted Sunday for Saturday, because Christ rose from the dead on a Sunday, and the Holy Ghost descended upon the Apostles on a Sunday.

Q. *By what authority did the Church substitute Sunday for Saturday?*

A. The Church substituted Sunday for Saturday by the plenitude of that divine power which Jesus Christ bestowed upon her.

# When the Mark Will Be Received

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## QUESTION 19

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*Do Seventh-day Adventists teach in their authorized literature that those who worship on Sunday and repudiate in its entirety the Seventh-day Adventist teaching as a consequence have the mark of apostasy, or "the mark of the beast"? Does not Mrs. White teach that those who now keep Sunday already have the mark of the beast?*

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Our doctrinal positions are based upon the Bible, not upon Mrs. White's writings. But since her name has been introduced into the question, an explicit statement from her pen should set the record straight. The following was penned by her in 1899:

No one has yet received the mark of the beast. The testing time has not yet come. There are true Christians in every church, not excepting the Roman Catholic communion. *None are condemned until they have had the light and have seen the obligation of the fourth commandment.* But when the decree shall go forth enforcing the counterfeit sabbath, and the loud cry of the third angel shall warn men against the worship of the beast and his image, the line will be clearly drawn between the false and the true. Then those who still continue in transgression will receive the mark of the beast.—*Evangelism*, pp. 234, 235. (Italics supplied.)

This has been her uniform teaching throughout the years—excerpts twisted out of their setting by detrac-

tors notwithstanding. This position is sustained by the same writer in *The Great Controversy*:

But Christians of past generations observed the Sunday, supposing that in so doing they were keeping the Bible Sabbath; and there are now true Christians in every church, not excepting the Roman Catholic communion, who honestly believe that Sunday is the Sabbath of divine appointment. God accepts their sincerity of purpose and their integrity before Him. But *when Sunday observance shall be enforced by law, and the world shall be enlightened concerning the obligation of the true Sabbath, then whoever shall transgress the command of God, to obey a precept which has no higher authority than that of Rome, will thereby honor popery above God.* . . . As men then reject the institution which God has declared to be the sign of His authority, and honor in its stead that which Rome has chosen as the token of her supremacy, they will thereby accept the sign of allegiance to Rome—"the mark of the beast." And it is not until the issue is thus plainly set before the people, and they are brought to choose between the commandments of God and the commandments of men, that those who continue in transgression will receive "the mark of the beast."—Page 449. (Italics supplied.)

Sunday-keeping is not yet the mark of the beast, and will not be until the decree goes forth causing men to worship this idol sabbath. The time will come when this day will be the test, but that time has not come yet.—Ellen G. White Manuscript 118, 1899.

To your inquiry, then, as to whether Mrs. White maintained that all those who do not see and *observe* the seventh day as the Sabbath *now* have the "mark of apostasy," the answer is definitely No.

We hold the firm conviction that millions of devout Christians of all faiths throughout all past centuries, as well as those today who are sincerely trusting in Christ their Saviour for salvation and are following Him according to their best light, are unquestionably saved. Thousands of such went to the stake as martyrs for Christ and for their faith. Moreover, untold numbers

of godly Roman Catholics will surely be included. God reads the heart and deals with the intent and the understanding. These are among His “other sheep” (John 10:16). He makes no mistake. The Biblical principle is clear: “Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin” (James 4:17).

Seventh-day Adventists interpret the prophecies relating to the beast, and the reception of his work, as something that will come into sharp focus just before the return of our Lord in glory. It is our understanding that this issue will then become a worldwide test.

# Who Constitute the “Remnant Church”?

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## QUESTION 20

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*It is alleged that Seventh-day Adventists teach that they alone constitute the finally completed “remnant church” mentioned in the book of Revelation. Is this true, or do Seventh-day Adventists recognize by the “remnant” those in every denomination who remain faithful to the Scriptures and the faith once delivered unto the saints? Do Adventists maintain that they alone are the only true witnesses of the living God in our age and that their observance of the seventh-day Sabbath is one of the major marks that identify them as God’s remnant church?*

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The answer to this threefold question will depend quite largely on the definition given to the word “remnant.” If, as is implied in the second part, “remnant” is taken to mean the church invisible, our answer to the first part is an unqualified No. Seventh-day Adventists have never sought to equate their church with the church invisible—“those in every denomination who remain faithful to the Scriptures.” If the word “remnant” is used in terms of its definition in Revelation 12:17, a proper answer will call for the presentation of certain background material.

We believe that the prophecy of Revelation 12:17 points to the experience and work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, but we do *not* believe that we *alone* constitute the true children of God—that we are the only true Christians—on earth today. We believe that God has a multitude of earnest, faithful, sincere followers in all Christian communions, who are, in the words of the question, “true witnesses of the living God in our age.” Ellen G. White has expressed our view plainly: “In what religious bodies are the greater part of the followers of Christ now to be found? Without doubt, in the various churches professing the Protestant faith.”—*The Great Controversy*, p. 383.

There is a historical background for our understanding of Revelation 12:17.

All through the centuries there have been neglected or forgotten truths that needed re-emphasizing, departures and apostasies that needed protesting, reforms that needed to be effected. And God has laid the burden on the hearts of some to proclaim these truths.

The Protestant Reformation broke away from the papal church proclaiming the abandoned or forgotten fundamentals of the gospel, and repudiating the gross apostasies of that time. Separation became inevitable because of the attitude of the established church. But before long, serious differences arose among the Reformed bodies as conscientious men in the various communions emphasized different aspects of truth. And various national and state churches soon came into being. These held varying degrees of truth.

Thus, out of the Reformed group in England, the Anglican Church developed. But because so much of

Catholic ritual, form, and ceremony were retained, various Separatist and Independent groups came into being. Because of opposition and rejection of their spiritual contributions, the Baptists and other Independents arose in England and the Continent, not only stressing the purer gospel, but emphasizing baptism by immersion, soul liberty, and separation of church and state. There was another step away from certain aspects of medieval theology retained in the Reformed faiths.

John Wesley and his associates also, seeking holiness of life and stressing free grace, were ridiculed and ostracized, and in time were forced to form a separate body. In the next century, in America, Alexander Campbell and his followers, believing that reform was needed, organized their own group. Many denominations were thus founded.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, when rationalism and higher criticism had honeycombed many of the churches—with denial of the full inspiration of the Word; the deity of Christ; His virgin birth, sinless life, and vicarious atoning death; His literal resurrection and ascension; the heavenly ministry of Christ; and His second, personal, premillennial advent—God raised up many courageous leaders to proclaim the faith once delivered to the saints. In time this upsurge called for a break, and a separation took place in the ranks of Protestantism. This is reflected in such Antithetical groups as the National Council of Churches and the National Association of Evangelicals.

Seventh-day Adventists believe there are special truths for today that we have been called of God to

give. We definitely feel that we must emphasize certain neglected truths, must restore others that most Protestant bodies no longer stress, and must continue the work of the Reformation. We hold the basic evangelical truths in common with conservative Christians generally. Baptism by immersion and soul freedom, or separation of church and state, we share with the Baptists, and some others; emphasis on godliness of life and free grace we share with the Methodists; the seventh-day Sabbath we share with the Seventh Day Baptists; and so on. The particular emphasis on the nearness of the return of Christ was stressed during the worldwide Advent awakening within the Christian churches in the early decades of the nineteenth century. This we have continued to proclaim.

We recognize that God has been leading in all these revivals and reformations, but Seventh-day Adventists have the profound conviction that not only must the world now be warned concerning the imminence of earth's transcendent event—the second coming of Christ—but a people must be prepared to meet their Lord. Therefore we feel that an emphasis on certain special truths is due the world at this time. We believe we are living in the hour of God's judgment (Rev. 14:6, 7), and that time is running out. We believe (in common with most historic creeds) that the Ten Commandments are the standard of all Christian living, and by that same law God will judge the world (James 2:12). Moreover, it is our belief that the seventh-day Sabbath is enjoined by the fourth precept of the Decalogue.

But on this point we would re-emphasize what we

have already stated on Question 11, that one's effort to obey the law of God, however strict, can never be a ground of salvation. We are saved through the righteousness of Jesus Christ received as a gift of grace, and grace alone. Our Lord's sacrifice on Calvary is mankind's only hope. But having been saved, we rejoice that the righteous requirements of the law are fulfilled in the experience of the Christian "who walks not after the flesh but after the spirit," and who by the grace of God lives in harmony with the revealed will of God.

Following as we do the principles of the historical school of prophetic interpretation, it is our conviction that the events portrayed in Revelation 14 to 17 are in process of fulfillment, or are about to meet their fulfillment. And to prepare men everywhere for what is coming on the earth, God is sending a special message couched in the terms of the "everlasting gospel . . . to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" (Rev. 14:6). That message urges men to turn from every false way of life and to worship the true God who created the heavens and the earth. Furthermore, we believe that God has brought the Seventh-day Adventist movement into being to carry His special message to the world at this time.

Consistent with our understanding of prophetic interpretation, we believe the book of Revelation pictures the final scenes in the great drama of redemption. John, looking down through the centuries, beheld the warfare of the dragon against the church. This contest between the forces of good and of evil is graphically portrayed in the twelfth chapter. A "woe" is pronounced on "the inhabitants of the earth and of the

sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time" (verse 12).

Through the centuries the Lord protected His church, often opening areas of refuge where the persecuted peoples could be "nourished . . . from the face of the serpent" (verse 14). Coming to the end of the chapter the prophet describes the final struggle, saying: "And the dragon was wroth with the woman [the Christian church], and went to make war with the remnant [the last segment] of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (verse 17). God will have His loyal and faithful children down to the end of earth's history. In harmony with our understanding of prophecy, we see in verse 17 a graphic description of the final warfare between Satan and those who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Those who will feel the full fury of the dragon's wrath are spoken of as "the remnant of her seed," or in Adventist language, "the remnant church."

It is in a spirit of deep humility that we apply this scripture to the Advent Movement and its work, for we recognize the tremendous implications of such an interpretation. While we believe that Revelation 12:17 points to us as a people of prophecy, it is in no spirit of pride that we thus apply the scripture. To us it is the logical conclusion of our system of prophetic interpretation.

But the fact that we thus apply this scripture does not imply in any way that we believe we are the only true Christians in the world, or that we are the only

ones who will be saved. While we believe that the Seventh-day Adventist Church is the visible organization through which God is proclaiming this last special message to the world, we remember the principle that Christ enunciated when He said, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold" (John 10:16). Seventh-day Adventists firmly believe that God has a precious remnant, a multitude of earnest, sincere believers, in every church, not excepting the Roman Catholic communion, who are living up to all the light God has given them. The great Shepherd of the sheep recognizes them as His own, and He is calling them into one great fold and one great fellowship in preparation for His return. Our position on this point is clearly stated by Ellen G. White:

Among earth's inhabitants, scattered in every land, there are those who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Like the stars of heaven, which appear only at night, these faithful ones will shine forth when darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people. In heathen Africa, in the Catholic lands of Europe and of South America, in China, in India, in the islands of the sea, and in all the dark corners of the earth, God has in reserve a firmament of chosen ones that will yet shine forth amidst the darkness, revealing clearly to an apostate world the transforming power of obedience to His law.—*Prophets and Kings*, pp. 188, 189.

Every jewel will be brought out and gathered, for the hand of the Lord is set to recover the remnant of His people.—*Early Writings*, p. 70.

We believe the majority of God's children are still scattered in this way throughout the world. And of course, the majority of those in Christian churches still conscientiously observe Sunday. We ourselves cannot do so, for we believe that God is calling for a reformation in this matter. But we respect and love

those of our fellow Christians who do not interpret God's Word just as we do.

Our study of prophecy, according to the historical school of interpretation, convinces us that just before the appearing of our Lord and Saviour, great issues will challenge both the church and the world. Circumstances will so shape themselves that every soul on earth will be tested as to his loyalty to God. In accordance with the teaching of Christ we believe that many who today profess His name and claim to be followers of His truth will at that time compromise their faith and actually deny their Lord.

That which leads up to this crisis is outlined, we believe, in Revelation 13. In this prophecy two great powers appear under the symbols of a ten-horned beast from the sea, and a two-horned beast from the earth. These dominating powers are seen to unite in a single purpose, that of opposing God and persecuting His people. Their combined opposition will be universal, and so influential that they will succeed in getting a decree passed, possibly through some world court legislature, that those who withstand their edict will be prohibited from doing any business whatsoever; even food will be denied them.

The effect of this decree will be upon all, "both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond." No one will escape. It will result in worldwide boycott of those who serve God. In that crisis many will compromise their principles and deny their faith.

And it is our belief that God wants the whole world, especially those who love and serve Him, to be prepared for that tremendous issue. Therefore, He is

sending a special message to all the peoples of earth. This message first calls men to accept salvation through His grace, and then it sets the issues clearly before them by unmasking the man of sin and revealing the subtlety of his attacks, so that when the test comes, each individual will be able to make intelligent choice. In harmony with that interpretation of prophecy we feel that God is giving tests of loyalty today, so that when the final issue comes and the whole world will divide itself on the matter of loyalty to God or compliance with the satanic edict of the world, men will be ready for the test.

In every great crisis God has had loyal, faithful ones whose allegiance to Him has been more precious than life itself. And in this coming hour of test we believe that He will have a loyal "remnant." We believe that finally the "remnant" people will include every true and faithful follower of Christ. We believe God has given us a solemn responsibility to carry His final message of entreaty to the world—"the everlasting gospel" (Rev. 14:6).

Our understanding of our place in preparation for these events is outlined in the following statement from Ellen G. White:

In the time of the end, every divine institution is to be restored. The breach made in the law at the time the Sabbath was changed by man, is to be repaired. God's remnant people, standing before the world as reformers, are to show that the law of God is the foundation of all enduring reform, and that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is to stand as a memorial of creation, a constant reminder of the power of God. In clear, distinct lines they are to present the necessity of obedience to all the precepts of the Decalogue. Constrained by the love of Christ, they are to coöperate with Him in building up the waste places.

They are to be repairers of the breach, restorers of paths to dwell in.—*Prophets and Kings*, p. 678.

To sum up the matter: We believe that through all the ages God has had His elect, distinguished by their sincere obedience to Him in terms of all the light revealed to them. These constitute what may be described as the church invisible. We also believe that at various periods of earth's history God has called out a company of people, making them uniquely the depositories and exponents of His truth. This is strikingly illustrated by the history of Israel, and as already mentioned, by certain reformatory movements in the history of the Christian church.

We believe that in earth's last hour God has a special message for the world, to prepare all who will heed it to withstand the deceptions of the last days and to make ready for the second advent of Christ. We believe that He has raised up a movement—known as the Seventh-day Adventist church—for the express purpose of making it, in a special way, the depository and exponent of this message. While this company of God's children may be described as a church, we believe the term "movement" more accurately conveys the essential nature and purpose of this distinctive group with its distinctive message.

We conceive our task to be that of persuading men to make ready for the day of God, by calling on them to accept Heaven's special message and thus to join with us in proclaiming God's great truth for these days. Holding, as we do, that God raised up this movement and gave to it its message, we believe that before the final hour of crisis and testing all God's true children—now

so widely scattered—will join with us in giving obedience to this message, of which the seventh-day Sabbath is a basic part.

Finally, we would say with all the earnestness and directness we can command, that we repudiate any implication that we alone are beloved of God and have a claim upon heaven. We believe that all who serve God in full sincerity, in terms of all the revealed will of God that they now understand, are presently potential members of that final “remnant” company as defined in Revelation 12:17. We believe it to be the solemn task and joyous privilege of the advent movement to make God’s last testing truths so clear and so persuasive as to draw all of God’s children into that prophetically foretold company making ready for the day of God.

# What Constitutes “Babylon”?

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## QUESTION 21

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*Do Seventh-day Adventists teach or believe, as a body, that the members of the various Protestant denominations, as well as the Catholic, Greek, and Russian Orthodox churches, are to be identified with Babylon, the symbol of apostasy?*

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We fully recognize the heartening fact that a host of true followers of Christ are scattered all through the various churches of Christendom, including the Roman Catholic communion. These God clearly recognizes as His own. Such do not form a part of the “Babylon” portrayed in the Apocalypse. The matter of loyalty or disloyalty to truth is, in the ultimate, a question of personal relationship to God and the fundamental principles of truth. What is denominated “Babylon,” in Scripture, obviously embraces those who have broken with the spirit and essence of true Christianity, and have followed the way of apostasy. Such are under the censure of Heaven.

1. **HISTORICAL BACKGROUND IMPERATIVE.**—In order to set forth what Seventh-day Adventists believe on this point, it is essential first to get the background of historical applications that reach back some eight hundred years. The earliest application of the symbolic term

“Babylon” to the Papacy, or the Roman Catholic Church, appears in the writings of the twelfth-century Waldenses and Albigenses. But along with their identification of the dominant ecclesiastical apostasy of their day as the organization portrayed in the Bible prophecies, they also stated that many of God’s children were still in papal Babylon. And these they were constrained to “call out,” or urge to separate, from her apostasies. A long list of spiritual-minded medieval Catholics follow in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries—including pseudo-Joachim, Olivi, Eberhard, Wycliffe, Huss, and Savonarola—all boldly asserting that “Babylon” represents the corrupted church of Rome, and warning of her coming retribution. And for this some even went to the stake.

2. USED BY PROTESTANT FOUNDERS.—During the Protestant Reformation all leaders taught essentially the same, from Luther, in 1520, onward. These men were scattered over Germany, Switzerland, France, and England. In Britain were men like William Tyndale, Bishops Ridley and Hooper, Archbishop Cranmer, Bishops Bale, Jewell, and Coverdale, and John Knox and Lord Napier in Scotland. Ridley’s farewell letter before his martyrdom, in 1555, repeatedly referred to “Babylon,” and called for separation from Rome.

3. CONTINUED IN POST-REFORMATION.—In post-Reformation times some thirty prominent expositors maintained the same position, including such famous men as King James I, Joseph Mede, Sir Isaac Newton, Bishop Thomas Newton, Methodism’s founder John Wesley, and Johann Bengel and various other Continentals. Even in Colonial America, John Cotton,

Roger Williams, Increase Mather, Samuel Hopkins, and more than a score of others, down to President Timothy Dwight of Yale in 1812, made similar applications. One was the noted Baptist historian Isaac Backus, who in 1767 wrote: "She ['the church of Rome'] is the mother of harlots, and all churches who go after any lovers but Christ, for a temporal living, are guilty of playing the harlot." (See *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, vol. 3, p. 213.) Earlier, Roger Williams had complained to the British Parliament about Protestants' clinging to the spirit and doing the deeds of papal Babylon.

Meanwhile, several Old World Protestant writers had noted that Babylon, the "mother" of Revelation 17, had "daughters" that bore the same family name. And believing that certain other Protestant bodies had retained some of the characteristics and errors of the Papacy, they began to include them under the family name "Babylon." Among these writers were such non-conformists as Browne, Barrow, and John Milton.

4. BABYLON, MOTHER AND DAUGHTERS.—In the early nineteenth-century Old World Advent awakening, Lacunza, from within Catholicism, called Babylon "Rome on the Tiber." And various Anglican and non-conformist leaders—such as Cunningham, Brown, M'Neile, and Ash—pressed the application. The Protestant Association, organized in Exeter Hall in 1835—with such men as Croly and Melville—in 1839 sounded the "out of Babylon" call, including both Protestantism and Popery.

And the Dublin *Christian Herald*, edited by Anglican Rector Edward N. Hoare, asserted in 1830 that

the abominations of papal Babylon, the mother, "covered all Christendom." Alexander Fraser, of Scotland, and Anglican David Simpson, of England, held similar views. Fraser said that all churches were tinged with the spirit of Babylon. And Simpson declared that Protestant churches, of "whatever denomination," which partake of the same spirit and doctrines and circumstances, must be considered daughters.

In North America, passing Elias Smith and Lorenzo Dow, who wrote strongly on the Protestant daughters as related to Rome, Disciples churchman Samuel M. McCorkle declared that Protestantism had been be-fuddled by the wine of Babylon, and insisted that the "mother" church had Protestant daughters. And prominent Baptist clergyman Isaac T. Hinton (1799-1847) plainly hinted that nationally established Protestant churches are, because of church-state union and compromise, daughters of Babylon.

5. EMPLOYED IN ADVENT AWAKENING.—Then, during the Second Advent Movement in America in the 1830's and 1840's, there was growing proscription among the larger Protestant bodies against those who held premillennialist views, and increasing ecclesiastical opposition to emphasis on the Second Advent—particularly among the Methodists and Congregationalists of New England—forbidding the dissemination of Adventism. This opposition led to the sounding of the call to "come out" from the churches that rejected the Second Advent message and that clung to the tainted doctrines of Babylon. That was how the "call" came to be sounded at that time. It was not a condemnation of the host of godly individuals in the various Protestant

churches, but of the official attitudes and actions in rejecting the vital Second Advent truth. (A historical record appears in *Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, vols. 1-4.)

6. A THOUSAND YEARS OF PRECEDENT.—In the light of the historical record of a thousand years, there is nothing new or strange about Adventist employment of the term that had constantly been used by other bodies, as they felt that light and truth had been rejected and opposed. And the application of the term "daughters" of Babylon has similarly been used for some three hundred years.

Groups and organizations such as the Fundamentalists, the International Council of Christian Churches, and the National Association of Evangelicals have withdrawn from the older organizations because of what they believed to be modernist apostasy entrenched in the controlling leadership of various denominations.

7. EVIDENCES OF DEPARTURE.—Such are the historic precedents. Adventists believe that the term "Babylon," referred to in Revelation 17, has been rightly applied to the Papacy. Great Babylon, however, according to verse 5, is mentioned as a "mother." So the term "Babylon" rightly belongs to others also. We therefore believe that wherever there are individuals, or groups of individuals, that hold to and advocate the unchristian doctrines, practices, and procedures of the papal church, such may justifiably be denominated "Babylon"—hence, part of the great apostasy. Wherever such conditions obtain, Adventists, with others, believe that the guilty organizations may rightly be denominated "Babylon."

8. MATTER OF PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP.—We believe that conditions in the religious world will worsen, not improve, as we approach the world's climax (1 Tim. 4:1, 2; 2 Tim. 3:1, 5). And the gulf between apostasy and fidelity to truth will become wider and wider as prophecy fulfills before our eyes. But our statements regarding Babylon do not have the defamatory character that some would impute to us. They are uttered in sorrow, not for invidious comparisons.

We are conscious of the fact that membership in any church is not, in itself, evidence either of fellowship with Christ or of fidelity to the fundamentals of the gospel. As was the case of Israel of old, the Christian church throughout the centuries has been plagued by the presence of a "mixed multitude" (Ex. 12:38; Num. 11:4; Neh. 13:3). And this is particularly true of these latter times, when many have departed from the faith, as clearly foretold in Bible prophecy (1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Tim. 4:3, 4). We firmly believe that God is calling today for His children to break with everything that is alien to the fundamental, apostolic principles of truth.

## **VI. Questions on Prophecy, Daniel 8 and 9, and the 2300 Days**



# Basic Principles of Prophetic Interpretation

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## QUESTION 22

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*What are the basic teachings of Seventh-day Adventists in regard to the inspired prophecies of the Bible? And wherein and why do you differ from the postmillennialists and futurists? What about the "kingdom" prophecies, and the restoration of the Jews? Why do you differ from the postmillennialists and the futurists on their interpretation? Please be specific.*

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Three things profoundly impress the student of prophecy as he surveys the witness of the centuries: (1) The immutable purpose of God (Isa. 14:27); (2) His divine foreknowledge (Isa. 46:10; Acts 2:23), and the inspired revelation of the outline of the ages through the Bible prophets of old (Amos 3:7); and (3) His infinite patience with willful human beings who fall short of His plan for them.

As for the great outline prophecies of Holy Writ, Seventh-day Adventists believe that they are a divinely inspired portrayal of the ages. Most of our interpretation of prophecies of this type are not original with us. They are based on the findings of many of the most godly and eminent scholars of various faiths through the centuries. With the early church we hold that prophetic fulfillments are to be looked for in historical

events, and we find a progressive, contemporary recognition of the advancing epochs and major fulfillments of the prophetic outline in history.

We believe, with the majority of expositors from the early Church Fathers to modern times, that the four world powers of Daniel's outline prophecies were the Neo-Babylonian, Medo-Persian, Grecian (Macedonian), and Roman empires; that Rome was not to be followed immediately by a fifth world power, but was to be divided into a number of strong and weak kingdoms; that this breakup was attested as in process of fulfillment in the fourth and fifth centuries; that this was to be followed by the appearance of a powerful antichrist; and that antichrist would, in turn, be destroyed at the Second Advent, which will be accompanied by the literal resurrection of the righteous dead, and the binding of Satan during the millennium; and that the millennium will then be followed by the eternal kingdom of God.

We believe with many Reformation leaders that Rome's division into the ten kingdoms representing the various nations of Europe was followed by the papal Antichrist as the predicted dominant power of the Middle Ages (see p. 336). Thus we hold the historical view of prophecy. We reject futurism and preterism not merely because both systems were projected by the Roman Catholics in the counter-Reformation against Protestant positions, but because we find these interpretations out of harmony with Scripture specifications. Nor do we accept postmillennialism's now largely discredited thesis of gradual world betterment and approaching universal peace in a man-made kingdom of

God. Seventh-day Adventists believe that the sole hope of the world is the personal, premillennial second advent of Christ, which, we believe from the study of Bible prophecy, is imminent, but for which *we set no date*.

We believe that the prophecies simply form the background for the great redemptive activity of God as centered in the two advents of Christ. Christ came the first time to live among men as the Sinless One, and to die as the all-sufficient, vicarious, atoning sacrifice for the redemption of a lost race. And His priestly ministry in heaven spans the period between His ascension and His second advent as King of kings, to gather the redeemed and to end the tragic reign of sin.

### I. Adventist Views of Prophecy in Relation to Others

The subject of prophecy and prophetic fulfillment is entirely too broad to be treated adequately here. This answer will therefore be limited to points that seem most relevant to the topics considered in these questions and answers.

1. **CLASSIFICATION OF BIBLE PROPHECIES.**—The word “prophecy” means both forthtelling and foretelling; a prophet speaks forth the message of God, relaying reproof, correction, and instruction to man; he also at times foretells events of either the immediate or the distant future, announcing in advance the development of God’s purpose, or what will come to pass in the working out of certain circumstances.

Sometimes a prophet was termed a “seer,” meaning one who sees with supernatural sight. Sometimes God’s message comes to the prophet orally; sometimes

pictorially in vision. But whether the prophet hears or sees the message of God, he speaks it forth as the word of God, rather than of man. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21).

Prophecy may be classified in several ways:

By *content*, into—

a. ethical messages of reform for contemporaries as through Elijah, Jeremiah;

b. predictions, in which the ethical element may often occur as through Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel.

By *form*, into—

a. literal prophecies;

b. figurative or symbolic prophecies;

c. enacted prophecies;

d. prophetic parables.

As to *range*, into—

a. immediate or short-range prophecies;

b. predictions of single distant events;

c. long-range outline prophecies covering long periods;

d. prophecies of double application (immediate and future; or literal and figurative).

As to *fulfillment*, predictive prophecy may be divided into at least three categories:

a. predictions of divine purpose (independent of man's will or purpose);

b. predictions of divine foreknowledge (foretelling man's actions);

c. predictions of divine reward or punishment (conditional on man's good or evil actions).

Sometimes it may be difficult to determine whether a given prophecy belongs in one category or another, but all three classes of prophecy are sure, though in different ways.

2. FULFILLMENTS OF THESE THREE CLASSES OF PREDICTIONS.—Examples of predictions of these last three classes will make this clear:

Prophecies of the *first class* (God's immutable purpose) include, for example, God's prediction that Christ would die for man's salvation, and that the universe will ultimately be cleansed from sin. Prophecies of this type *must* come to pass, for they are a statement of God's eternal purpose or will to do something, independent of man's will or action.

Prophecies of the *second class* (foreknowledge) include predictions of Jesus' betrayal and crucifixion. This type of prophecy *will* come to pass, because God cannot be mistaken in His foreknowledge. In His omniscience, knowing "the end from the beginning," He was aware that evil men would betray and crucify Jesus, but the predictions did not force any of them to sin. Although a prophecy may predict "what God's foreknowledge had seen would be," yet as one of our most representative writers has said, "the prophecies do not shape the characters of the men who fulfill them. Men act out their own free will."—ELLEN G. WHITE in *The Review and Herald*, Nov. 13, 1900, p. 721.

Prophecies of the *third class* (those that promise reward or threaten punishment) are exemplified by Jeremiah's twofold prediction (ch. 17) of the permanence or the destruction of Jerusalem. We might say, further, that predictions of this class are equally sure,

but in a different way: It is certain, for example, that a man will surely experience the fulfillment of *either* the reward or the punishment predicted. If he fulfills the conditions for receiving the blessings, the penalties are not inflicted; if, on the other hand, he incurs the threatened punishment the alternate predictions of blessings are not fulfilled. The outcome is conditioned on man's choice of good or of evil. Thus when God utters either kind of prediction—promises or threats—to the same man or nation, it is obvious, in the very nature of the case, that any single prediction of reward or punishment may or may not be fulfilled, dependent on the freedom of the human will to comply or not to comply with the conditions; yet the certainty of prophecy is not in any way impaired, since either one or the other alternative—reward or punishment—will surely come.

It is true that fulfillment is one of the tests of true prophecy. Though mere fulfillment of prediction does not necessarily prove a prophet to be genuine (Deut. 13:1, 2), a failure of fulfillment proves a prophet false (Deut. 18:20-22), unless there was a stated or implied condition. Fulfillment as a workable test obviously applies only to immediate predictions, for long-range predictions to be fulfilled long after the prophet's death can be of no use to his contemporaries in deciding whether they should believe the prophet's messages and regard him as a genuine messenger of God.

3. **CONDITIONAL PROPHECIES.**—Prophecies that state or imply either promises or threats are conditional, dependent on man's actions. Conditionality is sometimes stated (Ex. 19:5, 6); sometimes not (Jonah 3:4). In

such prophecies we may find one set of fulfillments replaced by another, according to the response to the conditions, without in any way weakening the certainty of prophecy (Jer. 18:7-10).

Some predictions are delayed in fulfillment because of man's own actions or inaction; sometimes the fulfillment is different from the original possibility. There are obvious examples of both of these.

a. God had promised to take the Israelites from Egypt to the land of Canaan and to drive out the heathen inhabitants and give His people possession (Ex. 3:8; 15:17; 23:23; etc.). Yet when they neared the borders of the land, at Kadesh-barnea, the adverse report of the spies made them rebel and refuse to go on. Consequently, God said, "Ye shall not come into the land, concerning which I sware to make you dwell thererin" (Num. 14:30). They were to wander in the wilderness until that generation perished. God even called that "my breach of promise" (verse 34), for so it apparently was; but the next generation, nearly forty years later, did enter Canaan.

Today the long wait for the second coming of Christ leads some to ask, "Where is the promise of his coming?" The apostle answers, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

b. An example of a transformed fulfillment was the prophecy of the tribe of Levi, "I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel" (Gen. 49:7). Yet, because of that tribe's loyalty in a crisis, the scattering

was turned into a blessing. Levi became the tribe of the priesthood, and so did not inherit a section of land like the other tribes, and was not numbered as one of the twelve, yet Levi lived scattered among all the tribes, so as to be a blessing to all (Ex. 32:26; Num. 18:20-24). Sometimes Old Testament prophecies that are primarily literal are fulfilled in a figurative manner in the New Testament. But such fulfillments must be identified for us *by inspiration*; otherwise there would be no limit to speculative and fanciful interpretations.

As can be seen from these examples, the fact that we cannot always find a literal fulfillment of every detail of prophecy does not mean that the prediction has failed or that we must look for some fanciful fulfillment yet to come. Due allowance must be made, as even "literalists" know, for figurative language in ancient, as in modern, writing; also for Oriental modes of speech. Further, parables or symbols must be understood in terms of what the author intends to convey, not in terms of the irrelevant details of the picture (such as the spots on the leopard beast, or the five to five ratio of the wise and foolish virgins). When we consider the setting in which a prophetic message is given, seeking first for the direct and primary meaning, and then for any valid secondary or figurative meaning, we find that the prophecies are neither a phantasmagoria that means anything the imagination might wish to see in it, nor messages in cipher with a rigid meaning for every word—messages that must be fulfilled in detail or else the prophecy has failed.

4. VARYING VIEWS OF THE "KINGDOM PROPHECIES."  
—There has been much misunderstanding of the series

of promises and prophecies, chiefly in the Old Testament, concerning the place of Israel in God's plan—the so-called "kingdom prophecies."

The *postmillennialist* interprets the "kingdom prophecies" as wholly symbolic descriptions of a future golden age of the church, a millennium of worldwide righteousness, to be brought about by a larger measure of the present means of grace, not by the direct intervention of God. This, it is claimed, will prepare the whole world for the second coming of Christ at the end of the millennium to usher in the final judgment and eternity.

The *premillennialist* expects the present reign of evil to continue, and even grow worse, until the personal coming of Christ ends this age by catastrophic and supernatural means. He begins the millennium with a literal first resurrection (of "the saints") and ends it with the second resurrection (of "the rest of the dead"), and the final judgment, followed by the eternal state in the new heavens and new earth.

The *amillennialist* denies any millennial kingdom; rather, he equates it, like Augustine, with the triumph of Christianity in the present era. He agrees with the *premillennialist* that the world is not to see a golden age before the advent, that the wheat and tares will grow side by side until the direct and cataclysmic introduction of the next age by the advent of Christ, but he agrees with the *postmillennialist* that the advent is followed not by a millennial kingdom but by the final judgment and the eternal state.

The resurgent premillennialism of the early nineteenth century reacted vigorously against the "spirit-

ualizing" of the first resurrection and of the kingdom prophecies by the then-dominant postmillennialism. The premillennialists, who came to be known in Britain as "literalists," stressed not only a literal resurrection but also a literal kingdom on earth during the millennium. This would be under the direct or indirect rule of Christ, and would involve a literal application, to the Jews, of the Old Testament prophecies made to ancient Israel. Though historicists at first, most of these literalists soon took the next logical step; they became futurists. The fulfillments of the majority of the prophecies were looked for either at, or after, the end of the present age. All the kingdom prophecies that had not been completely fulfilled down to the last detail—Israel's triumph over earthly kings, her re-establishment in Palestine with the rebuilding of the Temple and the renewal of the animal sacrifices, and even the divine withholding of rain from any nation that should fail to come up to Jerusalem to the Feast of Tabernacles—all this, and much more, they held must be fulfilled in a literal future Jewish kingdom on earth after the second advent, during the millennium.

In North America the strong premillennialist movement of the mid-nineteenth century at first included literalists and Millerites. And since both were historicist premillennialists, they were allies against entrenched postmillennialism. But the Millerites believed, with the majority of the church through the centuries, that the prophesied kingdom was to be realized by the glorified church, not the Jews. They believed, further, that the millennium was to be the beginning of the eternal state.

Unlike most premillennialists today, Seventh-day Adventists hold that the kingdom promises are fulfilled in the experience of the church—today the “kingdom of grace” in the hearts of Christians, and eventually the “kingdom of glory” in the eternal state. So we differ from other Christian groups in our views on the kingdom prophecies.

## II. Adventist Views on the Kingdom Prophecies

1. PROMISES TO ABRAHAM.—The Old Testament makes it clear that the Hebrew people, the descendants of the twelve sons of Jacob, were chosen especially by God as the instruments for making known His purpose of salvation. Through them the Scriptures were given; through them the Messiah, the Christ, was to come; and through them all the nations of the world were to receive the blessings of salvation. Yet the Old Testament makes equally clear a fact that is often overlooked—that this status of being the chosen people was conditional.

God made promises on several occasions to their ancestor Abraham—that he would be blessed, that his seed would be numerous and become a great nation, that they would be given the land of Canaan, that this land was to extend from the “river of Egypt” (the Wadi el-Arish) to the river Euphrates. (See Gen. 12:1-3; 13:14-17; 15:5, 7, 18-21; 17:1-21; 18:18, 19; 22:15-18.)

2. PROMISES TO ISRAEL AT SINAI.—When God began to fulfill these promises to Abraham's descendants by bringing them out of Egypt to give them the Promised Land and to make them a nation, He made

a covenant with them at Sinai. The conditional nature of the promises to the new nation of Israel, as His chosen people, was very clearly stated right at the beginning:

Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation (Ex. 19:5, 6).

Their status as God's special people hinged on an *if*.

Nearly forty years later, as the second generation was on the borders of the Promised Land, Moses in his farewell address instructed them at length (Deut. 7:8), that if they hoped to see the fulfillment of the promises made to their fathers they must keep faith with the ever "faithful God, which keepeth covenant and mercy with them that love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations" (Deut. 7:9); that *if* they would "keep the commandments," the Lord would "keep unto thee the covenant . . . which he sware unto thy fathers" (Deut. 7:11, 12). On the other hand, *if* they disobeyed God they would perish like the nations that they were to dispossess (Deut. 8:1, 19, 20). Compare the warnings that the land would spue them out also, as it had spued out their predecessors (Lev. 18:26-28; 20:22). In a long series of blessings and cursings (Deuteronomy 27-30) the following blessings are conditioned on obedience to God's commandments: holiness, leadership, prosperity. The alternate curses include pestilence, famine, poverty, defeat, scattering among the nations—with, however, a promise of return from exile *if* they repented.

The alternatives presented make it clear that God's saying, "I will give" the various blessings was equivalent to "I am willing to give," "I purpose to give." But the Israelites were not left in doubt as to the conditions under which they would either gain or lose the promised blessings.

Note the specific statements of the conditional nature of the promises and prophecies to the literal nation of Israel in connection with all the points covered in the promises to Abraham. In each case the fulfillment of the promise was conditioned on obedience: (a) their status as the chosen people, Ex. 19:5, 6; Deut. 28:9; (b) a great nation, Deut. 28:1, 7, 9, 10, 13 (compare verses 15, 25, 48); (c) a holy nation, Ex. 19:6; Deut. 28:9; (d) blessings, Deut. 7:9-14; 28:1-14 (compare verses 15-68); 30:16, 19; (e) the land, Deut. 8:1, 7-9; 30:19, 20 (compare Lev. 18:26-28; Deut. 28:15, 64); 1 Kings 9:3, 6, 7; 1 Chron. 28:8; 2 Chron. 7:16, 19, 20; Eze. 33:24-26; 36:26-28; (f) the Davidic line of kings, 1 Kings 2:3, 4; 8:25; 9:4, 5; 1 Chron. 28:4-9; 2 Chron. 6:16; 2 Chron. 7:17-22; and (g) blessing to the nations, Eze. 36:23, 33-36; 37:23, 28.

But since the conditions were only *partly* met, the promises were only *partially* fulfilled in Hebrew history.

3. PROMISES TO DAVID AND SOLOMON.—To David, whom God chose "to be king over Israel for ever" (1 Chron. 28:4), and to his son Solomon, were fulfilled many of the early promises made to Israel—a great name, a great nation, prosperity, victory and peace, rule over other nations, dominion "from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphra-

tes" (Gen. 15:18; compare 1 Kings 4:21). Further, in David's time, God intended that Israel should "dwell in a place of their own, and move no more" (2 Sam. 7:10; 1 Chron. 17:9).

This does not contradict the earlier statements that Israel was to hold the land on condition of obedience (Deut. 8:1, 19-20; etc.), nor is it invalidated by the fact that they were later removed from it. It was not God's desire that Israel should be cast out of the land on account of their sins, any more than it is His desire that anyone should be lost by rejecting salvation (Eze. 33:11; 2 Peter 3:9). David understood this promise to be conditional, as is clear from his later address at the coronation of Solomon, when he admonished the assembled people: "Keep and seek for all the commandments of the Lord your God: that ye may possess this good land, and leave it for an inheritance for your children after you for ever" (1 Chron. 28:8).

Further, he recognized the promise concerning Solomon as conditional also: "I will establish his kingdom for ever, if he be constant to do my commandments and my judgments, as at this day" (verses 6, 7).

After the Temple was finished, God repeated the same promise to Solomon himself, placing the continuance of the kingship, of the Temple, and of Israel's possession of the land on condition of faithfulness to God (1 Kings 9:3-9; 2 Chron. 7:16-22).

God's statement of His purpose that Israel should "move no more" (2 Sam. 7:10), and that David's house would be established on the throne forever (verse 13) shows that He was willing to fulfill the promised blessings to Israel from the time of David

and Solomon. If the conditions had been met there would never have been a series of captivities.

But Solomon apostatized, and although he saw the folly of his ways before his death, his kingdom was divided, and ten of the tribes were permanently lost to his dynasty. It is true that his descendants ruled Judah as long as it lasted as a nation, but the kingdom eventually came to an end and the crown of David's dynasty was removed "until he come whose right it is" (Eze. 21:27). This refers to the *divine* Son of David (Matt. 21:5, 9). Though Solomon and the royal line of David failed to realize the promises, the prophecy of David's seed meets its fulfillment in Christ, who will yet rule over an eternal kingdom (Ps. 89:3, 4; Isa. 9:6, 7; Jer. 23:5; Luke 1:32, 33).

4. THREAT OF CAPTIVITY CONDITIONAL.—It was the nation's sins that brought the end of the Jewish kingdom in the Babylonian captivity (2 Chron. 36: 14-17). The Jews need not have been carried into exile. Jerusalem, with its magnificent Temple, might have stood forever and have been the metropolis into which kings and princes would enter, *if* the Jews had been faithful to their covenant—even *if* they had heeded Jeremiah's last-minute warning (Jer. 17:21-27).

In the chapter following this warning message, the acceptance of which would have averted the doom of Judah, Jeremiah records God's clear and explicit statement of the conditional nature of prophecies of rewards and punishments:

At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy

it; if that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent\* of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent\* of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them (Jer. 18:7-10).

That this principle referred to Israel is made clear by verses 11 and 13. National repentance even then might have reversed the fate of the kingdom, but Jeremiah's pleas went unheeded, and the result was exile.

**5. RESTORATION PROPHECIES AND THE NEW COVENANT.**—The Babylonian captivity, however, was not the end of God's patience. Even in exile there was yet hope for repentance that might avert the fulfillment of the prophecy of national downfall. God reassured them through Jeremiah that this captivity, though a punishment, was not "a full end" (Jer. 5: 10-18; 46:28). Beginning even before the exile, God had sent prophetic messages promising a return, and offering a full and glorious restoration under a new covenant (Jer. 31:27, 28, 31).

Under the national covenant made with God at Sinai and repeatedly reaffirmed, all Israel had failed miserably, as was amply demonstrated throughout their whole national history. The apostate ten tribes, long separated from the sanctuary and the theocracy, had already been swept away; now the remnant of Israel—the kingdom of Judah—which had fallen into apostasy more slowly, but no less surely, was being carried into

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\* This repenting of the good or evil God has promised is a statement in human terms that does not adequately represent the true nature of God, but is used in order to express the change in outcome. It is not actually God who changes. God has impartially announced the alternate consequences of man's good or evil choice; His attitude and His alternatives remain unchanged; but man's change of action brings an altered relationship toward God and a reversal of the consequences.

captivity, and the royal line of David was to lose the throne until the Messiah should come, "whose right it is to reign." At this dark hour God sent—through Jeremiah in beleaguered Judah and through Ezekiel among the earlier groups of exiles already in Babylonia—similar messages of a "new covenant," an "everlasting covenant," under which He would bless the exiles when they returned. He would restore them as God's holy nation, as a living demonstration of His love and care, and thus as an instrument of blessing to the nations of the world (see *Jer. 31:31-34; 32:36-41; Eze. 37:19-28*).

The people were evidently complaining that they were suffering for the sins of their fathers, for Jeremiah mentions their proverb, "The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge" (*Jer. 31:29*). Then he continues with the announcement of the new covenant, in which God will deal, not with the fathers, but directly with human hearts. He would put His "law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts," and every man individually, from the least to the greatest, was to know the Lord. He would forgive their sins and remember them no more (*Jer. 31:31-34*). In the next chapter Jeremiah speaks of it as the "everlasting covenant" (*Jer. 32:39, 40*), which is the covenant made with Abraham (*Gen. 17:7*).

Under the "everlasting covenant" God promised to put His "fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me" (*Jer. 32:40*). In this connection God would "give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever" (verse 39).

Ezekiel, the prophet to the exiles already in Babylon, spoke of God's giving them "one heart," and "a new spirit," exchanging "the stony heart" for "an heart of flesh" that they might "walk in my statutes," and promising that "they shall be my people, and I will be their God" (Eze. 11:19, 20). Ezekiel elsewhere mentions the "everlasting covenant" made with the restored exiles of both Israel and Judah, and the rule of David over a people cleansed from their sins (Eze. 37:19-28). Isaiah also speaks of the everlasting covenant (Isa. 55:3; 61:8).

6. GOSPEL IN THE EVERLASTING COVENANT.— Again Ezekiel uses almost the same words: "A new heart also will I give you. . . . And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes" (Eze. 36:26, 27). The *purpose* of the new covenant was to enable them to obey, "that they may fear me for ever," and "that they shall not depart from me"; "that they may walk in my statutes" (Jer. 32:39, 40; Eze. 11:19, 20); and the *means* of enabling was, "I will put my spirit within you" (Eze. 36:27). But in Old Testament times, as in the New, the natural heart "is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7). That is why the writing of the law of God in the heart involves giving man a new heart in place of his stony heart, a free and unmerited gift that can be received only by faith.

The new covenant, then, is nothing less than salvation by grace through faith, the reception of God's Spirit, enabling one to walk in newness of life. This is the New Testament gospel in the heart of the Old Testament.

There is no incompatibility here between law and grace. Even in the time of Israel there was no incompatibility between grace and the "ceremonial" law, for until Jesus died the rites and sacrifices were God's appointed way of directing the eye of faith to the coming Saviour. Not until the offering of the Lamb of God, once for all, was the ceremonial system abolished (Eph. 2:15). Thereafter insistence upon the ceremonial observances became a denial of faith in the all-sufficient sacrifice of Christ (Acts 15:1, 10; Gal. 5:1, 2). The new covenant, later ratified by the blood of Jesus (Heb. 8:6-13; Matt. 26:28), and mediated by His heavenly ministry (Heb. 8:6; 9:15; 12:24)—the covenant promising the divine writing of the law in the heart, with the indwelling of the Spirit, which produces the righteousness of the law in the life (Rom. 8:4)—is never at variance with the moral law of God, then or now.

7. CONDITIONED ON INDIVIDUAL ACCEPTANCE.—These prophecies of the restoration of Israel offered the new covenant to all, for all should know the Lord "from the least of them unto the greatest" (Jer. 31:34). God never offers forgiveness, cleansing from sin, and a new heart except on condition of *individual* repentance. The restoration connected with the new covenant could go into effect only in so far as the individual Israelite would accept the covenant. Those to whom God would give a new heart "shall be my people, and I will be their God." The next verse excludes those who refuse to be cleansed: "But as for them whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations, I will recompense their way

upon their own heads, saith the Lord" (Eze. 11:20, 21).

The everlasting covenant was made with Abraham, who was called the father of the faithful (Gen. 17: 1, 2, 7; compare Gen. 26:5), Isaiah introduces the everlasting covenant with the invitation, "Incline your ear," "come," "hear" (Isa. 55:3); and continues, "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found," "return unto the Lord" (verses 6, 7). God pledges His word as to His faithfulness (Jer. 31:35-37; 33:20-26); but His covenant is offered, not imposed. Therefore, the restoration promises under the new covenant are conditioned upon the Israelites' voluntary acceptance and their acting by faith upon that acceptance.

If all Israel, or even a large majority, had wholeheartedly entered into the new covenant and experienced the new heart through the indwelling of the Spirit of God, resulting in wholehearted obedience, what might have been the results! God still desired to use Israel as His special instrument to share the blessings of the new covenant with other nations.

**8. RESTORATION PROPHECIES PARTLY FULFILLED.**—The "restoration" or "kingdom" prophecies—some full of poetic imagery, others in literal language—speak of long life and Edenic conditions of the earth, of Israel's righteousness and world leadership, drawing the nations to her, and spreading the knowledge of the Lord over the world. The house of David was to be restored, and finally the Messiah was to come—the Messiah, who was to be "cut off," who was to be the Lamb of God that would ratify the new covenant, and who was to rule the kingdom in righteousness and finally bring in eternal peace. However, the golden age

was not to be altogether one of peace; apparently the jealousy of enemies was to bring war, which would end in final victory for God's people (Ezekiel 38; 39) before the second coming of Christ, and the transition to the eternal state.

The restoration promises were connected with the return from exile. To what extent were these predictions fulfilled after the Babylonian captivity? Cyrus granted the privilege of return to "all his people" (Ezra 1:3), which would include any worshiper of Jehovah from the northern tribes also. And under that and subsequent edicts several groups of exiles did return. They rebuilt the Temple and reconstituted the Jewish state under their own law (Ezra 6:14, 15; 7:11-26)—subject to Persia, of course. But the books of Ezra, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi show how they fell short of the restoration envisioned under the new covenant.

Their zeal for the law found expression in legalism and exclusiveness rather than in seeking the Spirit of God. The promise of the return was fulfilled; but the return was limited. Even the Temple that they built was but a modest edifice in comparison with the former. The glorious kingdom was not realized in the semi-autonomous state under the Persian Empire and under the Macedonian rule, or in the brief interval of independence under the Maccabean rulers. Finally came the subjection to Rome.

#### 9. MESSIAH'S KINGDOM OFFERED AND REJECTED.—

Then came the Messiah. The Carpenter of Nazareth began to preach, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand" (Mark 1:15). What Jesus offered

was the blessing of the new covenant, of the renewed heart, of the Spirit within. But this seemed a disappointment to most of the Jews. They had so long set their hearts on the material aspects of the kingdom prophecies that they had forgotten the spiritual. They wanted independence from Rome—even vengeance—but they did not want the law of love written in their hearts. They wanted the conquest of the Gentiles, but they were not interested in being a source of blessing to all nations. They remembered the king who was to sit on the throne of David, but they had forgotten the Suffering Servant. Consequently they could not recognize their Messiah when He came, and had no desire for His kingdom when He offered it to them.

If the Jews had accepted the new covenant and the Messiah's proposed kingdom; if, instead of the little handful of followers that Jesus sent out into the world to give His message, He might have had the whole nation, regenerated and dedicated, to use in evangelizing the world, what victories, what blessings, what rewards, might have been theirs under the leadership of the Son of God. The Lord was even yet ready to use His chosen people as instruments of blessing, as He had been in the days of the prophets of old. But they would not.

10. LITERAL ISRAEL REPLACED BY CHRISTIAN CHURCH.—Jerusalem knew not the time of her visitation, and consequently her house was left to her “desolate” (Matt. 23:28), and the rejected Lord wept over her fate. Though the destruction was delayed forty years, there was no repentance to avert the nation's doom. There was no assurance, as before (Jer. 5:10,

18), that the destruction was to be only temporary. The servants who had repeatedly abused the prophets had finally crucified the Son of the Owner of the vineyard, and consequently were dispossessed. The Son Himself had pronounced sentence upon them: "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" (Matt. 21: 43). Many were to come from the east and west to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the place of the rejected children of the kingdom (Matt. 8:11, 12). These were to come from among the Gentiles and would prove themselves "Abraham's children" more truly than the Jews because they "would do the works of Abraham" (John 9:39).

When the great body of the professed seed of Abraham—the official body—rejected their King, the Mediator of the new covenant, they inevitably cut themselves off from the Messianic kingdom and the covenant relationship. The only Jews who retained these relationships were the remnant (Rom. 11:5), those who accepted their Messiah and became the nucleus of the Christian church; these were the true children of Israel. To them were added the Gentile converts, the "wild olive" branches who were grafted into the parent stock in place of the natural branches that had broken themselves off (Rom. 11:16-24).

Thus the rejection of the nation of Israel did not invalidate the prophecies or cut off the line of God's chosen people. "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect" but "the children of the flesh" were replaced by "the children of the promise" (Rom. 9:6, 8)—the spiritual seed of Abraham.

11. NEW TESTAMENT APPLICATIONS OF THE KINGDOM PROMISES.—The children of Abraham “which are of faith”—all who are Christ’s, both Jew and Gentile—have thenceforth been heirs of the ancient promises (Gal. 3:7, 8, 16, 29). Both classes of Abraham’s seed, Jew and Gentile, are to receive the Abrahamic promises. Paul does not say that the *earthly-kingdom* promises to Israel belong to the Jew and *heavenly-kingdom* promises to the Christian, but rather he speaks of the inheritance of the *world* by *all* the seed:

“For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. . . . Therefore it is of faith . . . to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all (Rom. 4:13, 16).

Further, the Christian belongs to the kingdom of Christ (Col. 1:13; James 2:5; Rev. 1:6). Jesus Christ was promised as the Davidic King in connection with the new, or everlasting, covenant (Eze. 37:21-28; Luke 1:32, 33; compare Zech. 9:9-11; Matt. 21:4-9). By His sacrifice He became the mediator of that covenant (Heb. 8:6-13; 12:24; 13:20; compare Matt. 26:28; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20). Obviously, then, Christians are heirs of the new-covenant prophecies and the new-covenant kingdom.

That the church is now the covenant people, the chosen people, is clearly indicated by the application that two New Testament writers make of the original promise to the children of Israel at Sinai. Peter, addressing the “Christians,” as they began to be called, says:

“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood,

an holy nation, a peculiar people" (1 Peter 2:9). In writing to *Gentile* Christians (see verse 10), he is quoting, almost verbatim, Exodus 19:5, 6 (Peter uses the identical Greek words for "royal priesthood" that occur in the LXX for the Hebrew "kingdom of priests"). John writes to Christians of Asia Minor about Jesus, who "hath made us kings and priests [preferred Greek reading: "a kingdom, priests"] unto God and his Father" (Rev. 1:6). Again, he describes the redeemed in heaven as singing to the Lamb, "Thou art worthy" for thou "hast made us unto our God kings and priests [preferred Greek reading: "a kingdom and priests"]" (Rev. 5:9, 10). Both writers therefore apply to the Christian *church*—and not specifically to Jewish Christians—the covenant promise made to Israel, a conditional promise that the nation of Israel, by the rejection of the Messiah, had forfeited.

Why do these inspired writers apply the Israel kingdom prophecies to the non-Israelite Christians? Is it not because the true Israel is no longer the Jewish nation, but is rather the Christian church? The fact that Paul refers to "Israel after the flesh" (1 Cor. 10:18) implies that there is an Israel not after the flesh. He makes clear in several passages what he means when he refers to the true Israel. First, he mentions that not all Jews belong to Israel—"They are not all Israel, which are of Israel" (Rom. 9:6). Elsewhere he defines a true Jew: "He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly;" rather, he "which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart" (Rom. 2:28, 29).

The mark of the true Israelite then, is a circumcised heart. That this does not refer only to *Jews* with cir-

cumcised hearts is clear from verse 26: “If the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?” Therefore a Gentile Christian can be counted as a true, though not a literal, Israelite. Legalism? How can it be when God sent His Son “that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Rom. 8:4)? What he means by the true circumcision he explains to the Philippians: “For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh” (Phil. 3:3). This sentence may seem grammatically ambiguous, but in the context it is crystal clear that Paul is defining *true* circumcision.

The foregoing statements show clearly that Paul taught that the true Israel—not Israel after the flesh but Israel after the Spirit—is composed of both Jews and Gentiles, the children not merely of the flesh but of the promise, circumcised not in the flesh but in the heart (Rom. 9:8).

Again, Paul addresses Christians who were formerly Gentiles, and who are still called “uncircumcision” by the Jews who are such according to the flesh (Eph. 2:11). These Christians were once “aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise” (verse 12). Now, however, in Christ, through whom they have access to God by the Spirit, they are “no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God” (verse 19). In other words, the Gentiles, in becoming Christians, cease to be aliens and become fellow citizens, and heirs of the covenants of promise. Hence Chris-

tians, gathered from among both Jews and Gentiles, belong to the true commonwealth of Israel. That is how "all Israel shall be saved" (Rom. 11:26).

12. FULFILLMENT OF THE KINGDOM PROPHECIES.— The question naturally arises, If the Christian church is heir of the promises and the covenants, where are we to look for the fulfillment of all the prophecies that were not realized by literal Israel? In the early church, the present, or the future?

Wherever the kingdom prophecies are definitely applied by New Testament writers to events in the church, it is obvious that we are safe in following their inspired interpretative applications. Peter sees Joel's prediction of visions, dreams, and wonders among the remnant of Israel fulfilled, at least partially, in the miracles of the early church under the outpouring of the Spirit (Acts 2:16-21; compare Joel 2:28-32).

James, in delivering the decision of the church council of Jerusalem, quotes a prophecy of Amos concerning the restoration of Israel and applies it to the first Gentile converts to the church:

Simeon [Simon Peter] hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord (Acts 15:14-17; Cf. Amos 9:11, 12).

In other words, James is saying: Amos' prediction of what was to happen "after this" \* (i.e., after Amos' day)

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\*Curiously, the words "after this" and "return and" are not in the Hebrew of Amos 9:11, which begins: "In that day I will raise up the tabernacle of David."

has now begun to meet its fulfillment in the conversion of the Gentiles in the apostle Peter's day. That is, the prophecy of the restoration of the house of David, and of the Gentiles' seeking after the Lord, is now being fulfilled by the expansion of the church to include the Gentiles. The passage quoted from Amos is a prophecy of the restoration of Israel's Davidic kingdom and the incorporation of the "Gentiles" into that kingdom (Amos 9:11, 12); but James obviously applies it figuratively to the building up of the church of Christ the Son of David.

Peter finds in Isaiah's "corner stone" (Isa. 28:16) a prediction of Jesus as the chief cornerstone (1 Peter 2:6) of the "spiritual house" in which the Christians are built as "lively stones [E.R.V., "living stones"]" and as a "holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices" (verse 5).

Paul, in one short passage (2 Cor. 6:16-18), quotes from several prophecies connected with the new covenant and the restoration promised to ancient Israel—phrases borrowed from Jeremiah 31:33 (compare Jer. 32:38; Eze. 11:19, 20; 37:27); Isaiah 52:11; and Jeremiah 31:9.

The fulfillments to the church of the present age are of course figurative. Many of the prophecies unrealized in Old Testament times are to be fulfilled, some of

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Either James's phrase "return and build" is quoted from a different text of Amos or it is a paraphrase, exactly parallel to the common Hebrew idiom in which the verb "return" (*shub*, "to turn back") is often used to express either a reversal of attitude or a mere repetition. That is, to "return and do" something, can mean merely to do it again. The K.J.V. sometimes translates the phrase literally, as: "I returned, and considered all the oppressions" (Eccl. 4:1; compare 4:7; 9:11); "I will return, and have compassion" (Jer. 12:15); "Who knoweth if he will return and repent?" (Joel 2:14). Very often "return and" is simply translated "again," as: "He built again [margin: Heb. "he returned and built"] the high places which Hezekiah his father had broken down" (2 Chron. 33:3).

them literally, in connection with, or after, the second coming of Christ. But the fact that inspired writers have made figurative applications shows that we cannot require a literalness in detail.

The Christian church, then, is a "holy nation," composed not of a single race or nationality, but of every individual who is voluntarily under the new-covenant relationship with his Lord. Therefore its blessings cannot be those of national prosperity, territorial holdings, or victories over invaders. Ezekiel's promise of the deliverance of postexilic Israel from the hosts of Gog was not fulfilled literally, but in the Apocalypse is applied to the final destruction of the enemies of God and of His people after the millennium.

The glorious Temple pictured by Ezekiel is not fulfilled literally in the church, and cannot be, for the sacrificial types and shadows ceased in the antitypical sacrifice of Christ on Calvary's cross. Instead we have the priestly ministry of the Son of God in the sanctuary "not made with hands," in heaven itself.

Furthermore, the promise to Abraham that his seed should be heirs of the world, as well as the prophecies of the abundance and peace of Eden restored, will both find their actual fulfillment when the saints inherit the earth made new.

The Christian church, drawn from all nations, rather than from the Jewish nation, is now the vehicle for bringing God's blessing to the world. Its head is Christ, the Son of David, who now rules in the hearts of His people, and will, one day, rule in person in His eternal kingdom. It is "the kingdom of God . . . within you" (Luke 17:21), which "cometh not with observa-

tion [margin, “outward show”]” (verse 20), but grows like a mustard seed (Matt. 13:31, 32). Such is the spiritual kingdom to which we must now belong if we are to enjoy the blessings of the future kingdom of glory.

Thus the kingdom prophecies will finally be fulfilled, not in the presence of sin and repentance, birth and death, war and plague, but in the new earth. And the final fulfillment in the eternal kingdom of Christ will surpass everything promised to the Israel of old.

13. **JEW AND GENTILE IN THE KINGDOM.**—In holding that the kingdom belongs to the Christian church, we do not thereby deny the kingdom to the Jew. The heirs of the Abrahamic promise of the kingdom embrace all the spiritual seed—all who are Christ’s, all who are saved by the blood of the everlasting covenant—both Jew and Gentile. Thus any Jew may, *as a believer in the Messiah*, participate in the millennial reign of the saints as well as in the eternal kingdom of Christ. No Jew, *as a Jew*, may lay claim to an earthly, national millennial kingdom on the basis of the Old Testament kingdom prophecies.

14. **THE QUESTION OF THE JEWISH STATE.**—Let it be emphatically stated here that Seventh-day Adventist rejection of the widely held belief in a divinely promised future Jewish world-kingdom does not justify the charge of “anti-Jewish bias,” or of blindness to the political fact of the new Jewish state of Israel. Our prophetic interpretation does not involve either. We believe from Scripture, as has already been set forth, that the ancient Jews forfeited their kingdom and their special status as God’s chosen people (see Matt. 21:43; compare Jer. 18:6-10). Yet we also believe, from Scrip-

ture, that the Jew has equal status with every other human being, and equal eligibility to the benefits of the gospel of salvation (Rom. 10:12, 13). We consequently invite all, Jew and Gentile, to prepare with us to meet the coming King. That relatively few Jews have thus far accepted the offer of salvation through Christ is a matter of deep regret. It is our earnest hope, and to this end we pray, that many more will do so in these last days. We would rejoice if every living Jew were to accept Christ and thus have a part along with those from all nations, in the promised kingdom.

The existence of the modern state of Israel is no more valid evidence that the Jews, as a nation, are yet to fulfill the kingdom prophecies in Palestine, than was the British rule over that land a proof of the Anglo-Israel interpretation, which claims that the Anglo-Saxon and related peoples are the "true Israel," and thus heirs of the divinely promised kingdom. And our denial of both claims makes us neither anti-Jewish nor anti-British. We are not anti- any race or people on earth. But we believe that the state of Israel cannot claim ownership of the land of Palestine *on the ground of Biblical promises*. The question of mere territorial claims must be determined by international law. There is no justifiable reason for mingling our prophetic interpretation with such an international political problem. We are to present the Christian message, and extend Christian sympathy and Christian justice, to all impartially. We are not to let our theology tip the scales of justice toward Jew or Christian, Moslem or pagan.

Seventh-day Adventists believe that it is the mission of the Christian church to send the "everlasting gospel

. . . to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people," and to set before them the high privilege of membership in the kingdom of God.

15. PROPHECIES AFFECTING THE CHURCH AGE.— Since we hold, on New Testament grounds, that the church is the heir of the new covenant and the kingdom (as, let it be noted, has been the belief of the church throughout the centuries, unchallenged until modern times), we find a continuity of the covenant, the promises, and the prophecies in the church age. (After all, "*New Testament*" simply means "*new covenant*.") Jesus addressed Himself "to the Jew first," and had they accepted Him, He would undoubtedly have made the whole Jewish nation, not merely a handful of disciples, the nucleus of His kingdom. But this fact does not necessarily lead to the conclusion that the Sermon on the Mount, the prophecy of Matthew 24, and indeed the major portion of the teachings of Jesus, were addressed to the Jewish nation rather than to the Christian church of which He is the chief cornerstone. We take the New Testament as a harmonious whole, with Gospels, Epistles, and Apocalypse, addressed to the Christian church, in which both Jew and Gentile are one.

The new covenant, first offered by the prophets of old in connection with the kingdom promises, was mediated by Christ (Heb. 9:15), ratified by His blood (Heb. 13:20), typified in the Lord's Supper (Luke 22: 16), and reiterated in the Epistles. Thus it became a reality in the church, and the new-covenant kingdom exists now in its first phase, which is commonly called the "kingdom of grace," until at the second advent it

will become the visible “kingdom of glory,” which will continue on after the millennium as the eternal kingdom established on the new earth.

Since we see a continuity in covenant, promise, and prophecy, we do not regard the Christian Era as an interim dispensation between past and future Jewish dispensations, or as a gap in prophecy. We therefore look for prophetic fulfillments in the present age; and because we find them there, we are rightly classified as historicists in prophetic interpretation.

**16. THE CONSUMMATION OF PROPHECY.**—We find further strong implications for the continuous view of prophecy in the teachings of Jesus. He told His followers of events before they came to pass in order that, when they did come to pass, His people might believe (John 13:19). When asked about the destruction of the Temple, and the end of the world, or age (Matt. 24:3), Jesus spoke to His disciples of the beginning of sorrows—the false christ, the wars, and calamities—and He equated Daniel’s “abomination of desolation” with the surrounding of Jerusalem by armies, as a sign that they should flee for safety (Matt. 24:15, 16; compare Luke 21:20, 21). Heeding this warning (Matt. 24:16-18), the early Christians escaped, and saved their lives by flight preceding the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. He told His disciples to watch for the signs of the nearness of His coming. All this indicates that Jesus expected them to be constantly on the lookout for the fulfillment of prophecy throughout the Christian Era. This is in direct conflict with the concept that there were to be no fulfillments until after the removal of the church from the earth.

Furthermore, we see the outline prophecies of the successive kingdoms, of Daniel 2 and 7, in process of continuous fulfillment in history, from the time of the Neo-Babylonian Empire onward. And similarly, with the seventy weeks of years (Daniel 9) reaching their culmination in the time of Christ the Messiah. Not only that, but we find the apostles applying Old Testament prophecies to the Christian church of their own day. Since, then, we do not find in the kingdom prophecies, the outline prophecies, and the teachings of Christ and the apostles any justification for divorcing prophecy from the church age, we look for and find historical fulfillments throughout the centuries. In other words, we are historicist premillennialists.

### III. Implications of the Kingdom Prophecies

It will be seen, in this section, that the interpretation of the kingdom prophecies provides the key not only to the differences between varying views on the millennium, but also to other factors apparently unrelated.

1. **CHURCH VIEW OF THE KINGDOM.**—Note first the implications of the premise that has been generally held in the Christian church throughout the centuries, namely, that when the Jews rejected Christ they were rejected as a nation, and that thenceforth the true chosen people of covenant and promise—the saints, the “holy nation”—is the church, composed of all true Christian believers, whether Jew or Gentile. (See Acts 15:13-18; 1 Peter 2:9.)

Those who hold this premise as true must, if consistent, hold the following ten corollaries as also true:

(1) The “saints” who are persecuted by antichrist are not the Jewish nation but Christians, both Jew and Gentile. Thus antichrist must come *during* the Christian Era, or “church age,” and not after.

(2) The Christian church is present on earth *during* the tribulation inflicted by antichrist; thus there can be no pretribulation “rapture” of the saints.

(3) There is no future period allotted to the Jewish nation as God’s chosen people; thus the fulfillment of the seventieth week cannot be a yet-future Jewish period marked by the ending of the restored Temple sacrifices; it must consequently have been fulfilled in the past, most fittingly at the death of Christ. See Question 26.

(4) The future kingdom on earth cannot belong to the Jews as a people, but to the Christian saints, both Jew and Gentile, the true chosen people; thus the present return of the Jews to Palestine is not a forerunner of the prophesied kingdom.

(5) The fulfillment of the Old Testament kingdom prophecies is not to be expected in exact *literal* detail in the Christian church or *spiritual* Israel, as it would have been experienced by the Jews of ancient times if they had not forfeited their special status.

(6) The church age cannot be considered merely a “gap” between two Jewish ages—a period in which “the prophetic clock stopped ticking”\*; thus prophetic fulfillments are to be expected continuously throughout Christian history.

(7) The fulfillments symbolized by the “little horn,”

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\*II. A. Ironsides, *The Great Parenthesis*, 1943. p. 23.

of Daniel's fourth beast, are to be sought within the Christian age, not after a long gap in prophecy; thus there is no reason for a long gap between the Roman fourth empire and the rise of the little horn.

(8) The fulfillment of the "falling away," and the "man of sin" sitting in the "temple of God" (2 Thess. 2:3, 4), cannot rightly be connected with the Jewish Temple; therefore, it must refer to the Christian church. Thus it refers to an apostasy in the Christian church and an antichrist which arises in the church.

(9) The "kingdom" teachings of Jesus, as well as of the rest of the New Testament, belong to the church, not to the Jews (Matthew 5-7; 24; etc.).

(10) The church is heir to the new covenant, under which God's law is to be written in the heart by the Holy Spirit. This law is not the Jewish national and ceremonial law, which expired at the cross, but rather the moral law, which, as the Westminster Confession says, is "summarily comprehended in the Ten Commandments."

**2. THE KEY TO THE ADVENTIST VIEW.**—This presentation sets forth the basic difference between the Seventh-day Adventist historicist-premillennialist view and those of the amillennialists, postmillennialists, and *futurist* premillennialists. It will be seen that the key lies in the very concept of prophetic interpretation, and specifically in the approach to the so-called kingdom prophecies.

We disagree with the postmillennialist and amillennialist concept that prophecy—as applied to the kingdom prophecies and the millennium—is wholly figurative. Such an interpretation robs the predictions of

specific meaning. We likewise disagree with the futurist view, which seems to imply irrevocable decree in prophecy, to exclude or at least minimize any conditional prophecy, and to demand literal fulfillment for literal Israel in the future if not in the past. Such a concept is the root of futurism, pretribulationism, and dispensationalism. Seventh-day Adventists have little in common with postmillennialists, but they stand between the amillennialists and the futurists, agreeing partly with both.

Adventists, though sometimes charged with failing to "rightly divide" between the Jew and the church, avoid the two extremes of over-figurative and over-literal interpretation by a view that we believe is based on "rightly dividing" between the different types of prophecy. Holding to the "sure word of prophecy," we deny the "decree" definition and the literalist concept of prediction in general. We find in Scripture that some prophetic messages—such as the kingdom prophecies—given originally in a local, more immediate setting might be only partially or not at all fulfilled in their primary context, and yet be fulfilled in a remote time under different circumstances and in a different manner. In particular, the kingdom prophecies regarding Israel belong in a category separate from other predictions of decree or foreknowledge because they were *conditional* on man's actions. These were "either/or" alternatives of promised blessing and threatened penalty to Israel. As the Jews forfeited the blessing, they received the alternate penalty, and are today scattered among the nations.

Adventists do not, as the amillennialists have been

accused of doing, make the rewards to Israel figurative and the punishments literal. Like the futurists we hold that the promises made to Israel were as literal as were the warnings. The promises would all have been literally fulfilled if the Jews had not, through disobedience, forfeited them. They will, however, be ultimately fulfilled in principle to true Israel, for ancient Israel's failure as a nation could not frustrate the purposes of God. In place of the Jewish "branches," that were cut off, the Gentile converts were "grafted in," along with the natural branches that had accepted the Messiah (Rom. 11:24). Thus the spiritual children of Abraham, both Jew and Gentile, become "heirs according to the promise" (Gal. 3:29). We do not feel justified in making unlimited figurative applications; we must limit such applications to those given us by inspiration. Where we find the Old Testament prophecies unfolded in the New, we surely have a right to make the application, and there we find the ultimate fulfillment of the kingdom prophecies.

Seventh-day Adventists admittedly write and preach less on the kingdom prophecies than on the outline prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation, and for very good reason. The latter present many specific and detailed predictions that we believe can be seen fulfilled in history, or are in process of fulfillment in our own day. The past fulfillments strengthen faith in the divine inspiration of the Word. And the fulfillments unfolding before our eyes are needed to fortify us against the deceptions and trials of the last days.

The teaching that the Jews as a nation are no longer God's chosen people, and that the Christian church is

now heir to the promises is, we feel, sound scriptural doctrine, good historic Protestant theology and interpretation, as well as standard Adventist teaching.

To us it seems less helpful to the average man to present the kingdom prophecies than to present Christ and Him crucified, and to warn the sinner against the fatal delusions of these last days.

The preaching of prophecy is for the one purpose of uplifting Christ who is the center of all prophecy, and under the influence of the Spirit of God to prepare men for His glorious coming as King of kings and Sovereign Lord.

# Christ Pre-eminent in Daniel 8 and 9

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## QUESTION 23

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*Why do Seventh-day Adventists place so much stress upon the prophecies, especially of Daniel 8 and 9? Should we not rather center our emphasis and affection on Jesus Christ and on salvation through faith in Him? Are not the disappointed hopes of 1844 a rather shaky foundation upon which to base your expectation of the imminent coming of our Lord?*

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The prophecies of Daniel 8 and 9, which Seventh-day Adventists believe to be inseparably tied together, are precious to us for the simple reason that we understand their primary purpose to be the setting forth of Jesus Christ as our atoning sacrifice, made on Calvary nineteen centuries ago, and our mediating priest in heaven through the subsequent centuries, preparatory to His coming again as the eternal King of kings in supernal glory.

We believe that chapters 8 and 9 are inseparably related to each other, in that they lead up to, and involve, respectively, the wondrous preparatory events and glorious provisions of the first and second advents of Jesus Christ our Lord. And to us these two advents form the two interrelated centers, or foci, of God's

redemptive provisions for man.\* They thus constitute the focal points of time and eternity. To us there is no greater unfolding of the gospel provisions in all the prophetic Word than is revealed here.

At the first advent the incarnate Son of God lived a matchless, sinless life among men, as God's great servant and revealer, and as our example. Then, as the Lamb of God, He died a vicarious, atoning, reconciling death for a lost world (2 Cor. 5:19). And this tremendous redemptive act took place in the "midst" of Daniel's prophesied seventieth "week" of years.

This transcendent event certified before the entire universe the integrity of the multiple promises of redemption in Christ. And it was attested by His triumphant resurrection from the dead and His ascension into heaven, where, as our great High Priest, He ministers in the presence of God the benefits of the atonement made on Calvary. And we believe that, according to promise and prophecy, He entered upon the second, final, and judgment phase of that heavenly ministry when the great span of the 2300 year-days ended in 1844, as foretold in Daniel 8:14.

At the conclusion of His work as mediator, we understand that human probation will end forever, with every case settled for eternity and with the justice and righteousness of God vindicated before all the created intelligences of the universe. This, we understand, will be followed by Christ's second personal appearing, in

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\*At the *first* advent Christ offered Himself without spot unto God (Heb. 9:14), to purge our sins and reconcile us to God by His own atoning death. This laid the foundation for all the redemptive provisions to follow. And at the *second* advent He comes for the redemption of our bodies (Rom. 8:23), and for the eternal removal of every vestige of the consequences of sin. Around these two centers cluster His complete work of redemption.

power and glory, to raise the righteous dead to immortality, and at the same time to translate the righteous living (1 Cor. 15:51-54). Both groups of the redeemed—those resurrected and those translated—will then be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air, evermore to be with Him (1 Thess. 4:17).

That, to us, is the glorious tie-in and wondrous revelation of these two chapters. They portray, and involve, the Lord's miraculous incarnation, sinless life, divinely attested anointing, atoning death, triumphant resurrection, literal ascension, mediatorial ministry—and then His glorious return to gather His saints to be with Him forevermore. This we conceive to be the very heart and fullness of the gospel. That is why we love to dwell upon these prophetic chapters, which set forth the two wondrous advents of our Lord, and their inter-related aspects of redemption.

The intervening centuries of the Christian Era since the cross, now nearing their fateful close, are here uniquely unfolded in prophetic outline that we may understand the sequence of events, which are anchored to an immovable beginning date. Thus we are enabled to know the times, or latter days, in which we live in the outworking of God's great plan of redemption for all men in all ages.

Prophecy is basically the revelation of the redemptive activity of God in and through Jesus Christ. These chapters are therefore most precious to us, as they form the prophetic keystone in the imposing arch of complete and glorious salvation through Jesus Christ. This, to us, is not honoring and loving Christ less, but is simply another revelation, not too commonly stressed

today, of our incomparable Lord and Saviour. That is why we, as Seventh-day Adventists, have such a deep interest and profound belief in the majestic outline of the prophecies of Daniel 8 and 9.

As to the second question—concerning the “disappointment” of 1844—we feel that these two chapters not only portray the events leading up to the two advents, but that each was accompanied by a grave initial misunderstanding and disappointment. The first was experienced by the disciple band in connection with Jesus’ death on the cross as the Lamb of God. The other was experienced by those who expected the return of their Lord in glory in 1844, and who then, like the disciples, discovered their error of interpretation as to the event predicted. When the disciples saw Jesus die on the cross, they were bitterly disappointed. Their hopes were crushed, for they were persuaded that Jesus was the promised Messiah, as attested by His anointing by the Holy Spirit. They had heard Him declare that the prophetic “time” for His appearance was “fulfilled” (Mark 1:15). Doubtless He was referring to the close of the sixty-nine weeks of years and the beginning of the seventieth week of Daniel’s prophecy. They had witnessed His death at the specified time, but did not understand the significance of His atoning sacrifice until after the resurrection.

Somehow, they had been unable to grasp the idea that He would be “cut off” by violent death in the “midst” of that final week of years of the great Messianic prophecy. They had thought He would, at that time, restore the earthly kingdom to Israel, and that they would share prominently in His glorious reign.

When, instead, He went to trial and rejection, and to death on Golgotha, their hopes died with Him. And when they tenderly laid His bruised body in the tomb, their hopes, they believed, were buried beyond recall.

But everything was changed when He rose triumphantly from His sacrificial death. He Himself then unfolded to them all the prophecies concerning His life and death and resurrection. After His ascension, they sensed that their great disappointment in His death at the appointed time—as well as His resurrection, and ascension to minister as heavenly priest for man—was all of God's appointment. And this sequence of redemptive events was indeed the foundation upon which the Christian church itself was built. The time was correct, but the anticipated event—the setting up of the kingdom of glory—was wrong. Christ was not at that time to take the throne, but was instead to suffer death as our atoning sacrifice, and then as our mediating priest, to minister that sacrifice in heaven for man. Not until the appointed end of the age was He to return as conquering king. All then became clear, simple, and reasonable. It was simply the outworking of the immutable purpose of God, fully foretold by the prophets of old.

Similarly, we believe that the Advent band of 1844, with eyes fixed on another “time” feature—the end of the related 2300 year-days—mistakenly looked for Christ to appear at that time as King of kings and Lord of lords, to take the throne and reign forevermore. But such an expectation was similarly without warrant, either in promise or in prophecy. Christ, our mediating heavenly priest, was simply to enter at the

appointed time upon the final, or judgment, phase of His twofold priestly ministry, indicated by the cleansing, vindicating, or justifying judgment feature that marks the close of the 2300 years—before His coming as King of kings in power and great glory. And this coming we understand, will not take place until after the close of human probation and the end of Christ's priestly ministry.

The disappointment of the Advent believers of 1844 was, we believe, in a sense analogous to the disappointment of the disciples in their expectation that Christ would set up His kingdom at His first advent. They were both correct on their respective time emphasis, as based on the fulfillment of prophetic time periods, but were both totally wrong as to the event to take place. Nevertheless, God's great plan of complete redemption through Jesus Christ moved on toward its majestic close, meticulously fulfilling each of the multiple predictions, which have been carried out without deviation, in accordance with God's eternal purpose in Christ.

We do not consent, therefore, that the Adventist Church simply sprang out of a mistaken concept on the part of multiplied thousands, scattered all through the leading churches of the Old World and the New, regarding the imminence of the *second advent*, any more than we admit that the apostolic church grew out of the mistaken concept of events that marked the *first advent* of Christ.

In both cases the transient human misconception was but a passing incident, which quickly gave way to those enduring foundation truths that constituted the

occasion of, and afford the full justification for, the developments that followed. In each instance it resulted in a clearer understanding of our Lord and His redemptive work for man.

An emphasis on *time* was justifiable in each case, for the prophetic Word had indicated that something of great importance was about to take place. In each instance the truth was beclouded by human misconception. But the initial disappointment was speedily followed by clarifying light. In each episode, despite mistaken initial expectations, a tremendous fulfillment had actually taken place in the wondrous outworking of Christ's redemptive activity for man.

Thus it was that early error over the order of events was soon superseded by abiding knowledge and truth. The brief initial mistake of each group was quickly supplanted by a clear understanding of God's purpose. Confusion over the sequence of events in God's unfolding plan of redemption was soon clarified by a clear grasp of the divine outline of God's perfect plan of redemption. The faith of Adventism is therefore anchored in the perfection of God's revealed plan and purpose, not in the imperfection of man's knowledge and understanding.

Our hope and expectation is built on divine certainties, not on human frailties. It is founded on the established facts of divine revelation, not on a transient human misapplication. It is based upon the undeviating, sovereign purpose of God, not on the faulty, limited concepts of man. Such is the solid foundation of our advent hope and expectation. That is where we place the emphasis—on God's omnipotent, unchanging

faithfulness, not on man's faltering limitations. We do not censure the apostles for their mistake, for we see the hand of God behind it all, leading them out of the dark. Nor do we censure our own forefathers, for again we see the hand of God leading through their early disappointment. What at first was a terrible embarrassment, quickly became a movement marked by the blessing of Heaven.

This, then, is our faith: Christ has been moving forward from phase to phase in His all-encompassing work for the redemption of sin-alienated, lost mankind. Not one feature, or provision, has failed, or will fail. Our hope and our triumph are wholly in Him.

# Problems Pertaining to Daniel 8

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## QUESTION 24

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*What scriptural and historical basis do Seventh-day Adventists have for teaching (1) that the 2300 days ("evenings-mornings") of Daniel 8:14 symbolize years; (2) that the little horn coming out of one of the four horns of the he-goat (verse 9) stands for Rome; and (3) that the sanctuary of verses 11-14, which was to be trodden underfoot and then be "cleansed," or "justified," is the heavenly sanctuary? Are you not practically alone in holding such a concept?*

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As these questions all pertain to the vision of Daniel 8, it will be desirable to survey the chapter as a whole, in order to have the background for our position on these related points.

1. A SURVEY OF CHAPTER 8.—Daniel here gives a consecutive account of the prophetic symbolism dramatically portrayed before him in vision. But along with this fact it should be borne in mind that this chapter parallels the vision of the four-part metallic image of chapter 2, symbolizing four world empires, and the four beast-kingdoms of Daniel 7, which also portray Babylonia, Medo-Persia,\* Grecia, and Rome.

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\*This compound name is employed in conformity with the angelic interpretation ("Media and Persia," verse 20), and to emphasize the fact that neither here

The major difference is that the vision of chapter 8 begins with Medo-Persia.

Daniel first sees a ram with two horns. This is explicitly identified by the interpreting angel as Medo-Persia, with Persia predominant (compare verses 3, 4, and 20). It pushed, or butted, westward, northward, and southward, increasing in power and working out its own will.

Next, a shaggy "he goat" came with astonishing speed from the west. This represented Greco-Macedonia (compare verses 5 and 21), the goat being the national emblem of Greece, just as the ram was the identifying emblem of Medo-Persia. The Grecian goat's "notable" horn signified this kingdom under Alexander the Great (verses 5, 21), whose dominion extended from Greco-Macedonia to northwestern India, and from Egypt to beyond the Caspian Sea—the largest empire the world had yet known. There can be no valid question as to the identification, inasmuch as it is given by inspiration.

Then in 323 B.C., at the height of his power, Alexander died. At first the leading generals tried to organize the vast territory under regencies in the name of Alexander's half-witted half brother and Alexander's posthumous son. But after two decades of intermittent warfare between rivals, the two strongest bidders for centralized power were decisively defeated

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nor elsewhere does Daniel conceive of an independently existing Median Empire—a prerequisite to the "Grecian View" of the fourth kingdom of Daniel 2 and 7, which will be discussed under Question 28. The term "Medo-Persia" is currently employed by such conservative scholars as Robert D. Culver (1944), Edward J. Young (1949), Herbert C. Leupold (1949), and the *Catholic Commentary* (1955), as well as a large number of earlier men, such as Charles Boutflower (1922); Charles H. Wright (1906), and a host of great scholars, such as Keil (1869) and Zöckler (1870), and reaching back to Reformation times.

by a coalition of four who divided the empire into four kingdoms. These divisions (three of which survived as the monarchies of Macedonia, Egypt, and Syria, until the Romans took over) remarkably fulfilled the prophetic specifications of four horns toward the four points of the compass—Ptolemy holding Egypt, Palestine, and part of Syria, toward the south; Cassander ruling Macedonia and Greece in the west; Lysimachus supreme in Thrace and portions of Asia Minor, to the north; and Seleucus ruling from Babylonia and Assyria eastward. See *Cambridge Ancient History* (1928-38), vol. 6, pp. 462, 482, 483, 492, 498, 499, 502.

Then appeared a horn, out of one of them, distinct from the goat's previous four horns, one that from littleness became "exceeding great." It was seen sweeping southward (encompassing Egypt), eastward (absorbing Syria), and embracing Palestine, the "pleasant land" (verse 9). It took on amazing proportions. And this, we believe—in harmony with numerous recognized contemporary, and most past, authorities—symbolized Rome. Rome's pagan and later papal phases are evidently embraced under the one symbol.

This is further evidenced by the fact that chapter 8 parallels the visions of chapters 2 and 7—Daniel 2 setting forth the civil side, and Daniel 7 introducing the religious aspect. And in each of these repeating portrayals the first three world powers—Babylonia, Medo-Persia, and Grecia—were literally and historically followed by the Roman Empire in its pagan and papal phases.\* The West now became the seat of the empire,

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\*We are in agreement with Charles Boutflower (*In and Around the Book of Daniel* [1923], p. 293), who says: "Daniel's Fourth Kingdom is the Roman power:

with Italy occupying the central place. We consequently hold that this horn refers to the greatness and power of Rome.

**2. EARTHLY AND HEAVENLY SANCTUARIES INVOLVED.**—Because of the striking parallels between the prophecies of Daniel 2, 7, and 8, and because of inescapable historical similarity and continuity between the Roman Empire and the Roman Church, Adventists believe that the “little horn” of Daniel 8:9 represents both pagan and papal Rome.

Accordingly, the activities attributed to this “little horn” in Daniel 8:10-13, 23-25; 11:31; and 12:11 are to be understood as embracing *both pagan and papal Rome* in their scope.

Inasmuch as the 2300 “days,” interpreted as years (see section 6), reach far beyond the time of the earthly sanctuary, we believe they refer to the “greater and more perfect” heavenly sanctuary, of which the earthly was the “figure,” described in Hebrews 8 and 9. We also believe that the Hebrew word *tamid*, the “daily” in the book of Daniel (chs. 8:11-13 and 11:31), denotes the daily, or continual, services of the “sanctuary,” inasmuch as the word *tamid* appears in connection with the sanctuary. We therefore believe that the “sanctuary” of Daniel 8: 11-14 must involve both the earthly and the heavenly sanctuaries. And similarly, the “daily” must represent

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first in its earlier stage as a consular and imperial power, and then in its later stage, when as the ‘little horn’ it depicted the Papacy.”

Adolph Harnack (*What Is Christianity?* [1903], p. 270), presses the point that, after the Roman Empire’s disappearance, the Roman Church, under the Roman bishop, “pushed itself into the place of the Roman World-Empire, of which it is the actual continuation,” simply remodeling its form but governing the nations with the pope as overlord, and as the successor of Caesar’s Pontifex Maximus.

Gibbon also phrases it well when he suggests that pagan Rome disappeared, only to reappear as papal Rome. Hundreds of able scholars have held the same position.

the daily regular, or “continual,” services of both sanctuaries where involved. In like manner, the “transgression of desolation” surely represents the activities of both pagan and papal Rome that render such daily services inoperative or ineffective. Therefore the question “How long?” (of verse 13) and the answer “Unto two thousand and three hundred days” (in verse 14) obviously include both. And by parity of reasoning, the “host” must include both Jews and Christians, during the respective parts of the 2300 prophetic days when each sanctuary is operative.

3. **TWOFOLD TAKING AWAY OF DAILY.**—It is obvious that the activities of pagan Rome were concerned primarily with the earthly sanctuary, or Jewish Temple, while those of papal Rome must concern the heavenly sanctuary. Christ Himself applies “the abomination that maketh desolate,” of Daniel 11:31, to the desolation of the earthly Temple by the Roman armies in A.D. 70 (Matt. 24:1-3, 15-20; Luke 21:20). But Daniel 11:31 is obviously parallel to Daniel 8:11, 13, as both refer to the sanctuary and its desolation, and to the “daily,” or continual, and its being taken away. Christ thus applies Daniel 8:13, 14, in part, to the Temple in Jerusalem.

We therefore believe, first, that the taking away of the “daily” by *pagan* Rome represents the desolation of the Temple in A.D. 70, with the permanent cessation of its services (see Dan. 8:11, 13; 11:31; compare Matt. 24:1-3, 15-30; Luke 21:20); and second, that the taking away of the “daily” by *papal* Rome represents the introduction of such papal innovations as a mediating priesthood, the sacrifice of the mass, the confes-

sional, and the worship of Mary,\* by which it has successfully taken away knowledge of, and reliance upon, the continual ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, and rendered that ministry inoperative in the lives of millions of professed Christians. (See Heb. 7:25; 8:1-5; 9:24; etc.)

4. ROME FULFILLS FURTHER SPECIFICATIONS.—This application of the “exceeding great” horn to Rome is further confirmed by the fact that Rome fulfilled precisely the other specifications of Daniel 8. For example, Rome “stamped” upon the people of God (Dan. 8:10), relentlessly persecuting them throughout the centuries—in pagan times through tyrants, such as Nero, Domitian, and Diocletian, and just as tragically under the succeeding papal phase. Moreover, pagan Rome stood up against the Prince of princes (verse 25), who we believe to be Christ (compare Acts 3:15; Rev. 1:5), for it was a Roman governor who condemned Jesus, and Roman soldiers who nailed Him to the cross, pierced His side, and placed a Roman seal on His tomb.

Again, Rome in its later papal form trampled and desecrated the provisions of God’s sanctuary in heaven, by taking away knowledge of, and dependence upon, Christ’s “daily,” or continual, ministry as High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary (Heb. 7:25; 1 John 2:1). It has nullified reliance on the true atoning sacrifice of Christ on Calvary, once-for-all and all-sufficient, by substituting and repeating the daily sacrifice of the mass on thousands of earthly altars. It has thus obscured

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\*On page 44 of Bishop Fulton J. Sheen’s *The Eternal Galilean* (1954), appear the words: “Dedicated to Mary Mother of God, Queen of the Seven Swords, Advocate of Sinners at the Triune Throne, Daughter of the Father, Mother of the Son, Spouse of the Holy Ghost.” (Emphasis supplied.)

and mutilated the true worship of God, substituting the compulsory authority and enforced unity of a visible church for the voluntary and true unity of all believers in Christ—His mystical body or church. And it has imposed the authority of the visible pope in place of Christ, who guides and directs His church by His own designated vicegerent or representative, the Holy Spirit (John 14:16, 17; 16:7, 13).

Further, as already indicated, the Papacy has interposed the barrier of a human priesthood between the worshiper and Christ, in place of direct access by all to Christ our great High Priest. And it has instituted and established a system of salvation by human works in place of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ alone, substituting an earthly confessional in place of confession of our sins directly to Christ in His sanctuary in heaven.

In this way the truth concerning the wondrous provisions of redemption, centering in the cross, and made effective by our Lord's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, were "cast down," as the Papacy loaded truth with tradition and obscured it by perversion, substituting a system that deprived humanity of the direct benefits of Christ's atoning sacrifice and priestly ministry. In this it "practiced and prospered"—practicing its departures and deceptions, and prospering in its venal schemes and aggrandizement of power.

5. "EVENING-MORNING" A FULL DAY.—In the primary, literal sense, "evening-morning" obviously designated a 24-hour day, for according to Bible reckoning, each 24-hour day begins at sunset and ends at the following sunset (Genesis 1). Thus the dark part of the day, designated "evening," always precedes the light

part of the day, called "morning." And the very fact that in Daniel 8:14 the word for "evening" precedes "morning" inherently implies the same sequence of night and day, and therefore a full 24-hour day, not a half day, as some reckon (and thus make the 2300 days equal 1150 days).

If, then, 2300 evenings-mornings meant 2300 days, the period would, if reckoned as symbolic time in this symbolic prophecy, stand for 2300 literal years.

6. YEAR-DAY PRINCIPLE APPLICABLE.—On the consistency and propriety of applying the year-day principle to the 2300 days of verse 14, we would say: In all symbolic outline prophecies it would appear entirely proper to consider the accompanying time periods as also *symbolic*. And a symbol invariably stands for something other than itself. In the chapter under scrutiny, the prophetic symbols of nations—portrayed in Daniel 8 by a "ram" and a "goat"—do not stand for a literal ram and goat, but for the Medo-Persian Empire and the Grecian kingdom respectively, as declared to Daniel by the angel in his interpretation. To apply these two obvious symbols to literal animals would be a palpable denial and repudiation of their symbolic character, and of the interpretation given by the angel.

Similarly, we believe that in the symbolic time period given in connection therewith, the 2300 "days" cannot mean 2300 *literal* days. They must represent some other time unit in fulfillment. To apply them to that same number of days—or half days, as some seek to do—would likewise be to violate and negate their fundamentally symbolic character. Nor are we left in uncertainty as to the intent of this time feature. The

principle to be followed in interpreting symbolic time is: "I [the Lord] have given thee a day for a year" (compare Num. 14:34 and Eze. 4:6). We therefore believe, in harmony with many eminent scholars through the years,\* that the 2300 prophetic "days" indicate 2300 literal years in fulfillment, and that anything else, and anything less, would be contrary to the basic principle of time symbolism.

As far back as 1205, an anonymous Joachimite work interpreted the number 2300 as 23 centuries from Daniel's time. Later Villanova recognized the 2300 days as years by the year-day principle. Then in 1440, Roman Catholic theologian Nicholas Krebs of Cusa (*Conjectures of Cardinal Nicholas von Cusa Concerning the Last Days*), recognized the 2300 prophetic "days" as years, which he even then dated from Persia. This is one of his remarkable declarations:

In the same way it was opened up to Daniel in what way the last curse would be after the sanctuary shall be cleansed and the vision fulfilled; and this after 2300 days from the hour of the going forth of the word . . . according to the predicted number by resolving a day into a year, according to the unfolding made to Ezekiel [4:5, 6].—Translated from *Coniectura in Opera*, p. 934.

It should be added that the chronological or time placement of the 2300 year-days is not given in chapter 8. We are simply told that it was yet "for many days"

\*E. B. Elliott, for example (*Horæ Apocalypticæ*, 3d ed., vol. 3, pp. 226, 227), refers to "two most remarkable symbolic actions of that prophet [Ezekiel], which have been so frequently referred to in the year-day controversy by former commentators. He was on one occasion commanded by God to lie 390 days on his left side before the people; thereby to typify, in the symbolic character of their representative, the 390 years of the iniquity and concomitant debasement on the nation of Israel; on another, to lie 40 days on his right side, thereby to typify the 40 last years of Judah's iniquity. And the meaning of these mystical days was declared by God Himself. 'I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days 390 days. I have appointed thee each day for a year.'—A precedent more clear and complete than this could scarce be desired; as a *probable* key and guide to the meaning of the days in the symbolic visions that we have under consideration."

(verse 26), and that the events at its close would occur far beyond Daniel's time—actually, in the “time of the end” (verse 17). (The dating of the period will be discussed in Questions 25 and 27.

7. “DAILY”—CONTINUAL SERVICE OF SANCTUARY.—Daniel 8:11-14 is concerned with the sanctuary—its daily services, desolation, and restoration. The collective word customarily used for the various parts of the daily services—the offerings, incense, lights, et cetera—is *tamid*, meaning “continual” or “regular” (see Ex. 29:42; 30:7, 8; Lev. 24:2). And *tamid* is the term rendered “daily” in Daniel 8:11, 12, 13; 11:31; and 12:11. In each instance the word “sacrifice” is supplied by the translators. At first thought, this might not appear to be justified. But when it is remembered that the evening and morning sacrifices marked the evening and morning hours of prayer, incense, and sacrifice, it becomes apparent that the word “sacrifice,” while supplied by the translators, was not altogether inappropriate. Scholars maintain that in rabbinical literature\* both evening and morning sacrifices are similarly designated by the term *tamid*, standing alone as in the Hebrew text of Daniel.

In view of these facts, the word “evening” may appropriately be understood to mean “evening [sacrifice]

\*The Hebrew word *tamid*, for “continual,” in the books of Numbers and Exodus, is applied to the shewbread, incense, and burnt offering, as well as specifically to the evening and morning sacrifices. However, in later rabbinical usage *tamid* was used almost exclusively for the evening and morning sacrifices. This is seen in such works as the Talmud—*Pesahim* 58a, 61a, 63a, 63b, 66b, 73b, 96a; and *Sanhedrin* 35b and footnote (“By the offering of the *Tamid* or daily burnt offering”); *Sanhedrin* 36a, 44b, 49b, 88b, and footnote; *Zebahin* 91a (“sprinkles the blood of the *tamid*”).

Rabbi J. H. Hertz, in *The Pentateuch and Haftorahs* says:

“The daily continual (Heb. *tamid*) offering was in later times called ‘The *Tamid*.’ Offered throughout the year, it was ‘the centre and core of public worship.’”—On Num. 28:2-8 (Soncino ed., London, 1938), p. 694.

fice]," and "morning" to mean "morning [sacrifice]," which together constituted one complete cycle of the daily, "regular," or "continual" sanctuary ritual. They are obviously used to indicate that this is the vision concerning the sanctuary. Thus when the angel spoke of 2300 "evenings-mornings," Daniel would naturally understand 2300 *tamid* units, each made up of an "evening [sacrifice]" and a "morning [sacrifice]." He would not think of half of them as "evening" and half as "morning," making but 1150 complete units, or days. Accordingly, the translation "two thousand and three hundred *days*" very properly reflects the sense of the Hebrew construction, and of the context.\*

In addition to the foregoing reasons, which are primary, we recognize as supporting evidence the fact that the Septuagint—the oldest translation of Daniel—and the Theodotion translation, four centuries later, both place the word "days" immediately following the

\*We are here in agreement with Dr. Edward J. Young, Professor of Old Testament, Westminster Theological Seminary (*The Prophecy of Daniel*, 1949, p. 174), who supports the full-days position:

"It means 2300 days. This interpretation appears in the Greek versions, Jerome, most Protestant expositors and AV [K.J.V.], and appears to be correct. . . .

"There is no exegetical support for the position that the phrase *evening-morning* means that the evenings and mornings are to be counted separately, thus 1150 evenings and 1150 days."

Commenting on the paralleling expression "forty days and forty nights," of Genesis 7:4, 12; Exodus 24:18; and 1 Kings 19:8, Young contends that it does not mean twenty days and twenty nights. And the three days and three nights of Jonah 1:17 are not taken as one and one-half days.

Keil states: "We must therefore take the words as they are, i.e., understand them of 2300 whole days."—C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Bible Commentary on the Old Testament, The Book of Daniel the Prophet*, p. 304.

Dr. Herbert C. Leupold, Professor of Old Testament Exegesis, Capital University Seminary (*Exposition of Daniel*, 1949, p. 354), also holds the 24-hour day interpretation:

"We have here one of the major cruxes of the whole book: What do the 'two thousand three hundred evenings-mornings' mean? The compound expression is so unusual that it perplexes the reader. Besides, in v. 26 the equivalent expression inserts an 'and' between 'evening' and 'morning' and prefixes the article to each of these words. Consequently v. 26 reads, *ha'erebh wehabqer*; v. 14, *'erebh boqer*. Yet both refer to the same period of time. Though we can cite no Hebrew parallel, the Greek suggests something analogous, namely, the word *nuchthēmeron*, which means 'a night and a day' (II Cor. 11:25) in the sense of a period of twenty-four hours. This is the simplest and most feasible interpretation."

2300 "evenings-mornings" to indicate the intent. "Days" is likewise used in the Vulgate and the Syriac. So also in Luther's German version. It is likewise the consistent rendering of Jewish expositors in the Christian Era, as well as of hundreds of early and later Christian exegetes. The Authorized, or K.J.V., similarly gives "days" in the text, putting "evenings-mornings" in the margin, but retaining the "vision of the evening and the morning" in verse 26. Albert Barnes represents many of the popular commentators when he remarks, "There can be no doubt, however, that a *day* is intended by this [an evening-morning]."—*Notes on Daniel*, on Dan. 8:14.

8. VINDICATION AT THE HEAVENLY ASSIZE.—In the light of the foregoing, we believe that the "sanctuary" presented in Daniel 8:11-14 could not refer alone to the Temple at Jerusalem. The sanctuary to be cleansed at the end of the 2300 days is, we understand, the sanctuary in heaven, "which the Lord pitched, and not man" (Heb. 8:2), and of which our triumphant, risen, and ascended Lord Jesus Christ is the great High Priest (Heb. 8:1). It is that "temple of God" which the prophet saw in heaven (Rev. 11:19; 15:5). This, we believe, is the temple that not only is to be "cleansed" (Dan. 8:14), but is also to be "justified" (margin), "put right," "vindicated," as will be noted shortly.

The typical services of the earthly sanctuary served as the "example and shadow of heavenly things" (Heb. 8:5). Now in the wilderness tabernacle and in the Temple later there were daily and yearly services. And we understand that the work of Christ, upon His ascension and inauguration as our heavenly high priest,

was foreshadowed by the *daily* service in the earthly type. This was the *first* phase of His heavenly ministry, mediating and applying the atoning sacrifice He had completed on the cross.

This daily service of the earthly sanctuary, involving the morning and the evening sacrifice—the *tamid* (Hebrew), or “continual”—fitly foreshadowed the continual efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ our Lord, accomplished on Calvary’s cross. The risen Christ, our ministering high priest, “ever liveth to make intercession” (Heb. 7:25) for us. Hence we understand His heavenly ministry to be the mediation of His complete and ever-efficacious atonement, which He made and completed on the cross for man, applying that atonement to the individual sinner as he accepts Christ as his personal Saviour.

But the annual Day of Atonement service (described in Leviticus 16) typified the *second and final* phase of Christ’s high priestly ministry, a work involving judgment. And we believe that we are now living in that time of judgment. It should be added that, in harmony with the Arminian concept of personal responsibility to God, our understanding of the Scriptures leads us to believe that the life record of every individual will be examined, and sentence of judgment pronounced on every case under review. (This is more fully discussed in Question 36.)

Not only does this final judgment involve the verdict of all cases before the bar of God, but it results in the justification of God’s character before all intelligences of the universe. It demonstrates for all eternity the groundlessness and falsity of Satan’s charges against

the character and government and law of God, and the justice and equity of God in deciding that those who have accepted the provisions of redemption shall constitute the citizens of His eternal kingdom and that all impenitent sinners shall be barred. The purpose of the judgment, of course, is not to enlighten God, but to satisfy forever the minds of all created intelligences, angels and mankind.

The universal verdict will be: "Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints" (Rev. 15:3); "Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus" (Rev. 16:5); and "Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments" (Rev. 16:7). Thus by the verdicts of the judgment of the heavenly sanctuary will the character of God be forever vindicated, as the climax of the "hour of his judgment" (Rev. 14:7).

9. INTENT OF TERM "CLEANSED."—The significance of the various terms used by translators to indicate the full intent of the "cleansing" (Hebrew, *tsadaq*) of the heavenly sanctuary (Dan. 8:14) should not be lost. Eleven different renderings appear in standard translations. These are: (a) "Cleansed" (Septuagint, Rheims-Douay, Moulton, Boothroyd, Spurrell, Martin, Vulgate, Harkavy, Ray, Knox, Noyes, French—Osterwald, Segond, and Lausanne—the K.J.V. and A.R.V.); (b) "be justified" (Leeser; Sawyer; A.R.V., margin; K.J.V., margin); (c) "be victorious" (Margolis); (d) "be righted" (Smith-Goodspeed); (e) "[be] declared right" (Young); (f) "be restored to its rightful state" (R.S.V.); (g) "be made righteous" (Van Ess); (h) "be restored" (Moffatt); (i) "be sanctified" (Fenton); (j) "be vindi-

cated" (Rotheram); and (k) "be consecrated" (Luther). See *Problems in Bible Translation* (Review and Herald), pp. 174, 175.

Standard lexicographers agree in rendering *tsadaq* as "to be just," "to be righteous." Gesenius' *Lexicon* (Brown, Driver, and Briggs edition) adds, "be put right," or "be put in rightful condition." And the R.S.V. renders the clause, "Then the sanctuary shall be restored to its rightful state." The translation "to cleanse" is evidently borrowed from the Septuagint (*katharisthēsetai*), followed by the Vulgate (*mundabitur*). We recognize that the justifying, vindicating, and making righteous of the Levitical sanctuary was accomplished by the services on the Day of Atonement, when the sanctuary was cleansed from all defilement (Lev. 16:16).

This cleansing, however, was definitely included, for in Leviticus 16:16 an "atonement" was made, in this sense, for the children of Israel because of their "uncleanness." On that day the "iniquities of the children of Israel" were removed (verse 21). The antitype of that service, we believe, will be found in connection with Christ's ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, and this is apparent from Hebrews 9:23:\*

It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified [*katharīzo*] with these; but the heavenly things themselves [shall be purified] with better sacrifices than these [that of the Lamb of God].

\*Brooke Foss Westcott (*Epistle to the Hebrews*, 1892, p. 270) makes this significant comment on Hebrews 9:23:

"The fact that such a mode of purifying by blood was enjoined for the material instruments of worship carried with it the inevitable consequence that some analogous and therefore some nobler purification should be provided for the divine archetypes." "The whole structure of the sentence requires that 'cleansed' should be supplied in the second clause from the first."

Such is our understanding of the larger and wider concept of God's great plan of saving men, as revealed in Daniel 8, for since our Lord's death, resurrection, and ascension, the heavenly sanctuary is now the center of Christ's wondrous priestly work of intercession. The sanctuary on earth with its types and shadows has passed. But in heaven Christ carries out His work of mediation that culminates in the work of judgment. We therefore conclude that His mediation embraces both the ministering of Calvary's atoning sacrifice to every soul who accepts the provisions of His grace, and the ultimate elimination of sin from the universe of God. Thus this ministry will, we believe, eventuate in the purgation or destruction of everything connected with evil—Satan, its author, and his cohorts (Matt. 25:41; Heb. 2:14), death (1 Cor. 15:26), and the works of the devil (1 John 3:8; compare Rev. 20:10, 14).

# Relation of Seventy Weeks of Daniel 9 to 2300 Days of Daniel 8

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## QUESTION 25

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*Seventh-day Adventists seek to tie Daniel 9 to Daniel 8. On what basis do you hold (1) that the 2300 days (evenings-mornings) of Daniel begin at the same time as the seventy weeks of years of Daniel 9; and (2) that the seventieth week is already entirely fulfilled? (3) Since you so hold, what then is your interpretation of Daniel 9:27?*

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Inasmuch as these questions center chiefly in Daniel 9, let us survey the chapter briefly in order to get the over-all picture, and thus have the necessary background for the answers. This prophecy of the seventy weeks of years is one of the most fascinating and vital to be found in the entire prophetic Word. It deals with God's plan for the redemption of man, and foretells the time of the first advent of Christ, as the Messiah, also the time of His death, when He made a complete, vicarious atoning sacrifice for the sins of the world.

The seventy-weeks prophecy has to do with the Jews, the Holy Land, the Holy City, and the sanctuary—the nerve center, truth center, Temple center, and then the rejection center of the Lamb of God by His ancient people. Note the setting: Darius the Mede

was on the throne. Daniel was praying and interceding with God concerning the tragic condition of His backslidden and disobedient people, and the desolation of Jerusalem and the sanctuary (verses 3-19).

1. DANIEL 9 THE KEY THAT UNLOCKS CHAPTER 8.— The prophetic symbols of Daniel 8:2-14—namely, the “ram” as Medo-Persia, the “goat” as Grecia, and the “exceeding great” horn as the terrifying power that would succeed, which was Rome—had all been explained by Gabriel, the celestial messenger, in verses 15 to 26. That is, *all except the symbolic time element involved in the 2300 days, with the events marking their close and the time of their beginning.*

Because of Daniel’s sudden illness as the vision of chapter 8 was being explained to him, Gabriel had been unable to explain this remaining time feature—the 2300 days of verses 13, 14, and 26. The dread prospect of the terrible persecution to come upon the people of God evidently caused the aged prophet suddenly to faint and become ill (verse 27). So the explanation broke off precipitately at that point.

This unexplained portion, it will be observed, pertained to the “sanctuary and the host,” which were to be “trodden under foot” for 2300 “days” (evenings-mornings), with special events to occur at their close (verses 13, 14, 26). It involved a persecuting power that was to stand up against the Prince of princes and that was to practice and prosper against the people of God, but that would finally be broken without hands.

This revelation profoundly impressed the prophet and, as noted, might well have been the cause of his illness. Chapter 8 closes with certain questions still un-

answered. Later, as Daniel meditated on the vision and its relationship to the condition of his people, he pleaded earnestly with God for the termination of Israel's captivity and their return to Palestine. His prayer brought a speedy answer, for Gabriel was sent to bring him comfort and to unfold the plan of God more fully.

Gabriel had previously explained to Daniel all but the time portion of the symbolic vision of chapter 8. Now he reappears to complete the explanation *in literal terms* (Dan. 9:21, 22) and to clarify this remaining part. The angel uses the arresting words, "Consider *the vision*." This expression provides the key to the explanation, for the term "vision" appears ten times in chapter 8. But it is to be noted that in Daniel 8 and 9 two Hebrew words, *chazon* and *mar'eh*, differing somewhat in meaning, are used in the original Hebrew text. In the English translations only one word, "vision," has been used to express these slightly variant thoughts, and as a result, the exact intent of the original has not always been perceived.

2. TERMS MAY CONNOTE DIFFERENT CONCEPTS.—The Hebrew words for "vision" may be significant. It is possible that when the word *chazon* is used, the reference is to the vision as a whole. On the other hand, where the word *mar'eh* is employed, the reference could be to the particular things seen and heard in the *chazon*.\* One feature seen in the over-all *chazon* was the "two thousand and three hundred days" of

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\*The slight difference in the Hebrew words was indicated in a translation of the Bible in 1764 by Anthony Purver. *Chazon* he rendered "vision," but *mar'eh* he translated as "appearance."

Daniel 8:14. This special scene is referred to as "the vision [*mar'eh*] of the evening and the morning" (verse 26).

When the angel Gabriel, "whom I [Daniel] had seen in the vision [*chazon*] at the beginning" (Dan. 9:21), returned to complete his explanation of the vision, he directed Daniel's attention specifically to the vision (*mar'eh*) when he said, "consider the vision [*mar'eh*]" (verse 23).

It will be remembered that according to Daniel 8:26, 27, it was the *mar'eh* "of the evening and the morning" that Daniel did not understand. It was not the vision as a whole, for all but the scene of the evening and the morning had been explained.

There can be no mistake as to this identification of "*the vision*." S. R. Driver, the noted critic (*The Book of Daniel*, 1936, pp. 133), recognized this, and wrote concerning "the vision at the beginning" (Dan. 9:21) that it refers to "viii. 16." The chapter 8 usage and the chapter 9 tie-in appears inescapable, and the identical theme of the two chapters becomes self-evident. *What follows in chapter 9 is therefore not a new and independent vision, but is the continuing literal explanation of the symbolic "vision" of chapter 8.*\*

We would stress this point, that *in chapter 9 Gabriel was not introducing a new line of prophecy*. He was simply continuing and completing his interrupted explanation, picking up the thread just where he had

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\*Numerous Bible students recognize Daniel 9 to be a continuation of Daniel 8, and when commenting on "whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning" (Dan. 9:21), refer back to Daniel 8:17, 27. Among these may be listed Chr. Wordsworth, T. Robinson, Matthew Henry, William Hales, Thomas Scott, F. C. Cook, *The Cambridge Bible*, the *Critical and Exegetical Bible*, etc.

laid it down in his previous appearance to the prophet, recorded in chapter 8. His last words, on the former occasion, had been to the effect that "*the vision*" (*mar'eh*) of the 2300 evenings-mornings was "true," and that the period involved was to extend over "many days," far into the future.

In the light of these facts, which seem to us to be conclusive, Seventh-day Adventists—along with many scores of scholars of former days—definitely believe that Daniel 9 furnishes the key that unlocks the *time feature* of Daniel 8—the 2300 year-days. To us the two chapters appear to be inseparable, and must be so understood if there is to be any explanation of the time feature of Daniel 8:14, 26.

Daniel 9 was obviously given to provide advance knowledge of the timing of Jesus' anointing as the Messiah—"Christ" denoting "anointed" in the Greek, and thus matching the Hebrew *Mashiach*—preparatory to His public ministry. And Keil, with many others, identifies *mashiach nagid* as Christ.\* The allusion here is not to His incarnation or birth, but to His anointing at the time of His baptism, for it was then that He was anointed by the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:37, 38) and was manifest as the Christ, or Messiah. Thus Andrew said to his brother Peter, "we have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ ["anointed," margin]" (John 1:41).

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\*Numerous theologians through the centuries have recognized "Messiah the Prince," of Daniel 9:25, to be Jesus Christ our Lord. For example: In the *Church Fathers*, Clement of Alexandria (*Stromata* i. 21); Tertullian (*Answer to the Jews* 8); Origen (*De Principiis*); Julius Africanus, etc.; in the commentaries: Calvin, Matthew Henry, Clarke, Scott, and T. Robinson; *Westminster Commentary*, and Gray's *Christian Workers' Commentary*; and among expositors or translations: Newton, Wieseler, Delitzsch, Von Orelli, Fenton, Young, Knox, K.J.V., and Douay.

3. "DETERMINED" MEANS "ALLOTTED," "DECRED," "CUT OFF."—Gabriel turns immediately to the time feature of the vision, and declares, "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people [the Jews] and upon thy holy city [Jerusalem]" (verse 24). The Hebrew word *chathak*, translated "determined," appears nowhere else in the Bible; consequently it is not possible to bring other Biblical usages of this word to bear on the present passage in clarifying its meaning.

The 1832 edition of Gesenius gives the meaning of *chathak* as "determine," "to destine," and in Chaldee "to cut," "decide." But the 1846 edition renders it "to cut" "to divide," also "to decree," "to determine." The *Student's Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary* of 1914 gives "to cut, to decide, to determine, to decree," and Rotherham in his *Emphasized Bible* stresses the meaning "divide." He then proceeds to show that the seventy-week period was divided into seven weeks, sixty-two weeks, and one week. Still further usage is seen in Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, page 367; compare Koehler and Baumgartner, *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros*, volume 1, page 343, giving *schneiden* ("to cut"), *entscheiden* ("to decide").

These three meanings—"to cut," "to decide," and "to determine"—appear in the ancient translations of the Old Testament into Greek. The LXX, translated at Alexandria, probably in the second century B.C., gives *chathak* in Daniel 9:24 as *ekrithēsan*, i.e., "adjudged," "determined." On the other hand, the Greek translation made by Theodotion in the second century A.D. (usually published in modern editions of the

LXX) renders *chathak* by *sunetmēthēsan*, to “cut off,” “cut short.” (See also Liddell and Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, vol. 2, p. 1726.) The Vulgate uses the verb *abbreviare*, “to cut short.” Hitzig renders it “appointed”; others, “destined,” or “apportioned.”

The R.V. and the A.R.V. give “decreed,” and the *Preacher’s Homiletical Commentary*, as well as Strong in his *Exhaustive Concordance*, stresses the Chaldee meaning, “to cut off,” or “to cut in pieces.”

The various meanings of this Hebrew word have real significance. The seventy-week period was definitely “allotted,” or “apportioned,” to the Jewish people, during which time certain specific things were to be accomplished. And in God’s plan this period was “decreed,” or “determined,” for this purpose. But the word *chathak* also has the meaning “cut off,” as indicated in so many of the lexical authorities. The expression “cut off” is significant, for that which is cut off is “seventy weeks.” This, of course, is time; so it is time that is “cut off.” Just as a piece of material is cut off from a roll of material, might it not properly be said that the seventy-week period is cut off from a longer period of time?

This concept, in this particular case, is recognized by certain Biblical authorities. Barnes, when commenting on verse 24, states: “The meaning would seem to be, that this portion of time—the seventy weeks—was *cut off* [italics his] from the whole of duration, or cut out of it, as it were, and set by itself for a definite purpose.” Still further, the *Pulpit Commentary* on this verse agrees with this thought, for it remarks: “It means ‘to cut off.’ It may thus refer to these weeks

being 'cut off' from time generally; hence 'determined.'

With this recognition of the significance of the use of "cut off," we might well inquire, Is the seventy-week period "cut off" from time in a general or in a *specific* sense? We need to remember that in the symbolic vision of Daniel 8, reference was made to the 2300-day period. This was left unexplained. If Daniel 9 is the explanation of this unexplained portion of the vision, the explanation would inevitably have to deal with time. But the only prophetic time mentioned in the vision of Daniel 9 is the seventy weeks. Could we not logically conclude, then, that when Gabriel deals with the seventy weeks, or 490 years, he is explaining the first part of the 2300-days prophecy? This period (490 years) was allotted to the Jews with their *sánctuary* on earth; the remainder of the period (2300 years) would then reach into the Christian church period, with the *sanctuary* in heaven.

This concept—that the 490 years are cut off from the 2300-year period—seems to be the only consistent conclusion. That the seventy-week period is cut off from time is indicated by the two quotations just given. And the time from which it is "cut off" seems to be the period mentioned in the vision of Daniel 8, namely, the 2300-year period. William Hales (*A New Analysis of Chronology*, 1833, vol. 2, p. 517) came to this conclusion over a century ago:

This *chronological* prophecy . . . was evidently designed to explain the foregoing [chapter 8] vision, especially in its *chronological* part of the 2300 days.

With this concept, scores of scholars in various com-

munions in many lands, from the time of Johann Petri, of Germany, in 1768 onward, were in full but independent agreement.

4. SEVENTY "WEEKS OF YEARS" INDICATED BY CONTEXT AND USAGE.—The word translated "weeks," in Daniel 9:24, is *shabu'im* (singular, *shabua'*). *Shabua'* simply denotes a unit of seven, and may designate a period of either seven days or seven years. The intent must be determined by context and usage. In post-Biblical literature, also, the meaning "seven years" can be clearly demonstrated.\* *Hebdomas*, the LXX translation of *shabua'*, is used for a period of seven days and also for a period of seven years. The intent in the LXX must also be determined by context and usage. It is to be observed that this latter usage can be demonstrated in classical literature as early as the sixth century B.C. (see Liddell and Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, under *hebdomas*).

We are accordingly led to conclude, in harmony with a host of scholars, that in Daniel 9:24-27 the

\*As to "weeks of years" note the following from Jewish writings:

1. On "he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week" (Dan. 9:27), Midrash Rabbah reads, "'Week' represents a period of seven years."—*Lamentations*, Soncino ed., p. 65, note 3.

2. On "seventy weeks are determined" (verse 24), the Talmud reads, "This prophecy was uttered at the beginning of the seventy years captivity in Babylon. From the restoration to the second destruction is said to have been 420 years, making in all 490, i.e., seventy weeks of years."—*Nazir* 32b, Soncino ed., p. 118, note 6.

3. On "he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week" (verse 27), the Talmud says, "'One week' in Dan. ix means a week of years."—*Yoma* 54a, Soncino ed., p. 254, note 6.

4. On "seventy weeks"—i.e., seven times 70 years—J. J. Slotki states, "The cryptic phraseology may have been suggested by the seven-year cycle of Lev. xxv. The expression 'week of years' occurs in the Mishnah (Sanh. v. 1)."—*Daniel, Ezra, and Nehemiah*, p. 77.

5. Isaac Leeser writes, "Ancient Jewish writers thought that the second temple stood 420 years, which, with the 70 years of the Babylonian captivity, make 490."—*The Twenty-four Books of the Holy Scriptures* (1853), on Dan. 9:24, 25, p. 1243, note 47. Leeser also refers to Rashi and other commentators as recognizing "year-weeks" (note 48). On the "threescore and two weeks" (verse 25) Slotki says, "Jerusalem will be a fully restored city during a period of 434 years."—*Op. cit.*, p. 78.

prophet used *shabua'* to designate a period of seven literal years. The following are, to us, compelling reasons:

*a.* *Shabua'* occurs six times in Daniel 9:24-27. In each case the noun is *without qualification*. Elsewhere in the book of Daniel *shabua'* occurs only in chapter 10:2, 3. In these latter references the meaning is clearly "a period of seven days," for the verses are describing Daniel's fast—obviously of three literal weeks. But it is to be particularly observed that *shabua'*, as here used, is qualified by the word *yamin*, "of days," which is indicated in the K.J.V. margin as "weeks of days." Now the very fact that Daniel, the inspired writer, felt that qualification was necessary when merely a week of seven days was indicated, surely suggests that when he used the word without qualification, as in Daniel 9:24-27, he meant a period of seven years. And the LXX follows the same pattern, in this respect, as does the Hebrew. It has *hebdomas* standing alone in Daniel 9:24-27, but qualified by "of days" in Daniel 10:2, 3. The distinction and the intent are obvious.

*b.* It has been noted (see Question 24) that a characteristic feature of *symbolic* prophecy is to give the component time periods, not literally, but in symbolic form. And it has been further demonstrated that Daniel 9:24-27 is a continuation of the literal explanation of the symbolic vision that was begun in Daniel 8:19-26. Now, inasmuch as Daniel 9:24-27 is a portion of the *literal explanation* of the symbolic vision, we would logically expect the time elements likewise to be given in literal terms. Such is the case if *shabua'* is here given the obvious meaning of "seven years." It is

generally agreed among Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant scholars alike that if *shabua'* in Daniel 9:24 has the meaning "seven years," then seventy *shabu'im* clearly indicates a period of 490 years.

5. SUBDIVISIONS OF A SINGLE OVER-ALL UNIT.— There is first a general statement of the length of the period, and then the particulars of the manner of accomplishment. The seventy weeks, collectively, was divided for emphasis into three unequal segments—7 weeks, 62 weeks, and 1 week, giving a total of 70. An important development or event was connected with each part. These, we believe, were but subdivisions of a single chronological unit, the three parts following one another without a break. (Our reasons will be developed in Question 26.)

Note the situation: Jerusalem was in captivity and the sanctuary, or Temple, in ruins. Then came the "commandment," or issuance of a series of decrees, to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. According to Ezra 6:14 this commandment involved three progressive and interrelated decrees, given in sequence by Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes.\* That of Cyrus (who gave the order simply to restore the Temple) was issued in 537 B.C.; that of Darius Hystaspes (who confirmed the order and continued the work of Temple restoration) was probably given in 519 B.C.; and finally, the climactic decree went forth in 457 B.C., in the seventh year of Artaxerxes Longimanus, who sent Ezra to Judea with

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\*It took the three decrees—of Cyrus, of Darius, and of Artaxerxes—to implement the "commandment" of God (Ezra 6:14). But when 457 B.C. came, the "commandment" of God was complete. We consequently believe that 457 B.C., the seventh year of Artaxerxes, is the beginning date of the prophetic period referred to in Daniel 9:24.

new privileges and prerogatives. (See the accompanying diagram on page 280.)

The *Temple* was finished in 515 B.C., in the sixth year of Darius (Ezra 6:15). But it was not until 457 B.C. that the authorization was given for the complete restoration of the city. This looked forward to the Jewish state's receiving full autonomy, with provision for enforcing its own laws—subject, of course, to the overlordship of the Persian Empire (Ezra 7:11-26). It therefore took all three decrees, and particularly that of Artaxerxes, to complete and to constitute the “commandment” or purpose of God.\*

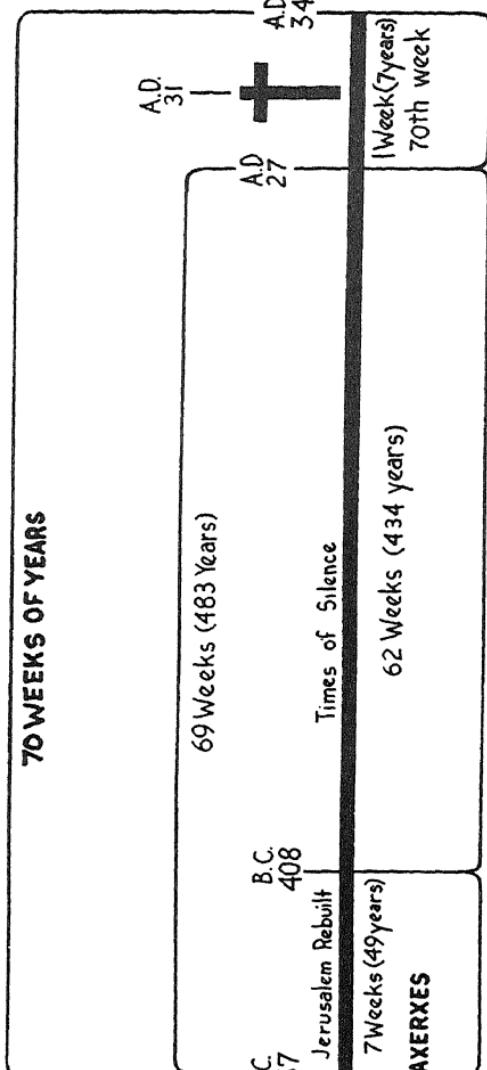
The initial seven weeks (or 49 years) saw the streets and the walls of Jerusalem rebuilt. The additional 62 weeks (or 434 years) reached to the time when Messiah should appear. This 62-week period was, in contrast, a rather quiet or silent stretch of years, including the time between Malachi, last of the prophets, and John the Baptist, herald and baptizer of the Messiah. It was, significantly, a period when there were no special prophetic communications from God to the people.

But the initial seven weeks of years, together with the 62 weeks, were to be considered as an uninterrupted chronological unit of 69 weeks (Dan. 9:25), and were to be without a break or gap. That is a total of 69 “weeks” of years (making 483 years) leading up to the final week of seven years, in the midst of which Messiah would be “cut off.”

The 483 years (69 “weeks”), it will be seen, reach

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\*As to 457 B.C. being the seventh year of Artaxerxes, and therefore the determinative date, see Siegfried H. Horn and Lynn H. Wood, *The Chronology of Ezra 7* (1953). (The detailed support for this date will appear under Question 27.)



Threefold Decree

"They finished their building by command of the God of Israel and by decree of Cyrus and Darius and Artaxerxes king of Persia." Ezra 6:14, R.S.V.

"After" 69 Weeks  
Messiah "cut off"  
Sacrifice and oblation to cease

6. Prediction Fulfilled

1. Finish "transgression"
2. End sin offerings
3. Make reconciliation
4. Bring in righteousness
5. Seal prophecy and vision
6. Anoint most holy

**THE 70 WEEKS OF DANIEL 9**

to the anointing of Jesus as the Messiah by the Holy Spirit at His baptism (Luke 3:21, 22). We believe that He began His public ministry in A.D. 27, following His anointing (Mark 1:14; Luke 4:18; Acts 10:38; Heb. 9:12). But the seventy weeks of years were not to close until the atoning death of Christ had occurred (see Section 9), resulting in six specific developments—indicated by the six consecutive clauses of verse 24. These were: (1) the Jews were to finish their transgression through the rejection of Jesus as the Messiah, (2) the Messiah was to make an end of sin offerings, (3) He was to make reconciliation for iniquity, (4) He was to bring in everlasting righteousness, (5) the vision was to be sealed or authenticated, and (6) the most holy was to be anointed.

But it was “*after*” the 69 weeks of years—yet within the last or seventieth week of years—that Messiah would be “cut off,” which is the focal point of this prophecy. And we believe that when our Lord ascended into heaven, and the Holy Spirit descended as the signal of Christ’s inauguration as heavenly Priest, there remained not one of these specifications of Daniel 9:24 that had not been fully accomplished.

As recognized by many Christian scholars, Jesus began His public ministry at the very beginning of the final or seventieth week of years, declaring “The time is fulfilled” (Mark 1:15). And in this final “week” of years, thus begun, He confirmed by His life and teachings, and ratified by His death, the everlasting covenant of grace God had made with the human family. Because of His death, resurrection, and ascension in the “midst” of the seventieth week, He did not remain

on earth during the second half of the seventieth week. But His message and mission continued to be preached for a little time (possibly three and a half years) to the Jews in Jerusalem by the first evangelists. Thus Israel's day of grace continued for a short space, and the seventy weeks ran their allotted course.

6. **MESSIAH “CUT OFF” BY VIOLENT DEATH.**—The precision of the closing events of the seventy weeks is most impressive. The confirming of the covenant characterizes the seventieth week, with the cutting off of the Messiah “in the midst of the week.” And even the place, or city, where the atonement was to be made is here revealed. Messiah the Prince, or the Anointed Prince\* (Dan. 9:25; compare Acts 10:38) would come, not as a glorious conqueror and emancipator, but would be “cut off” (*karath*) † by a violent, vicarious death (compare Isa. 53:8). This is the word commonly used for the death penalty. This was “not for himself” (Dan. 9:26)—it was a substitutionary death. However, the margin reads, “and shall have nothing.” ‡ It would be by judicial decree, or mob violence. And this would be in the “midst” (*chasi*) of the week (verse 27).

\*We agree with Keil (C. F. Keil and F. Delitzsch, *Bible Commentary on the Old Testament, The Book of Daniel the Prophet*, pp. 354, 355, 360), that there is only one who is at the same time both priest and king, after the order of Melchizedek (Heb. 5:6-10; 6:19, 20).

†The Hebrew word *karath* appears fully 180 times in the Old Testament. In most instances it is rendered “*cut off*,” such as “*evildoers shall be cut off*” (Ps. 37:9), the “*seed of the wicked shall be cut off*” (Ps. 37:28; see also verses 9, 34, 38); also “*destroy*” (Ex. 8:9; 1 Kings 15:13) and “*perish*” (Gen. 41:36).

‡On the clause “*and shall have nothing*” (Dan. 9:26, margin), many Hebrew scholars agree that the meaning is: He shall then possess nothing—no people, no place, no recognition, no kingdom. He shall be deprived of everything. (Thus, Calvin, Ebrard, Kranichfeld, Kliefot, Junius, Gaebelein, Morgan, Scofield.) Other renderings are: (1) “*not for Himself*”—but for others (Vitrina, Rosenmüller, Willett, Hävernick, Bullinger); (2) “*shall have no adherents*” (Auberlen, Grotius, margin); (3) “*there shall be none to help Him*” (Vatablus); (4) “*there shall not be to him*”—no city, sanctuary, kingdom, or people (Pusey); (5) “*it is not to Him*”—His place as Messiah, which was not accorded Him (Keil). How well this accords with the declaration that He “came unto his own, and his own received him not” (John 1:11).

The Messiah was cut off *by man for man*. Such was the means whereby this prophecy was to be fulfilled.

And "midst," we believe, is punctiliar, designating a point at which something is to happen—that something being the death of Jesus Christ the Messiah, which we understand occurred in the spring of A.D. 31, just  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years after His anointing and the beginning of His public ministry. Even if A.D. 30 be taken as the crucifixion date, it is still in the middle of this last week of years. Jerome's Vulgate reads *dimidio hebdomadis* ("in the midst of the week"). That is likewise the rendering of the K.J.V., Ray, Boothroyd, Sawyer, Spurrell, Young, Rotherham, Knox, Rheims-Douay, and A.R.V., as well as Luther's German and the French of Martin and Osterwald.\* Even the R.S.V., which here translates the Hebrew word *chasi*, as "for half of," in other places translates the same word as "in the midst of" (Joshua 10:13; Ps. 102:24; Jer. 17:11).

More than that, at the moment of Christ's death as the Lamb of God, all the typical sacrifices met their antitypical fulfillment. Their death knell was rung. The supernatural rending of the Temple veil (Matt. 27:50, 51) was Heaven's declaration that the typical Jewish animal sacrifices and oblations had ceased to have efficacy, and had forever ended in the plan of God. The way of access into the presence of God was opened through Christ (Heb. 10:19, 20). Man could now approach God directly, without the intervention of a

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\*Those who hold that Christ was crucified in the "midst" of the seventieth week include Keil, Pusey, Kliefoth, Jamieson, Faucett and Brown, Auberlen, Strong, Hävernick, Hengstenberg, Hofmann, Delitzsch, Wright, Boutflower, Young, and many others.

human priest, because Christ, and Christ alone, constituted the new and living "way" (John 14:6). The fulfillment completely met the specifications of the prophecy that said, "He shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease" (Dan 9:27).

The terminus of the seventieth week was not singled out as important. It would come after all six specifications were fulfilled. Numerous scholars have held that the rejection of the Jews, as God's covenant people, did not take place until the Jews stoned Stephen, the first Christian martyr (Acts 7:57-60). General persecution broke out upon the church (Acts 8:1) as the seventy weeks of years came to an end. The prophecy declared that the covenant was to be confirmed during the "one week" (Dan. 9:27). During the latter half of this prophesied seventieth week, the apostles preached the sacrificial death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ at Jerusalem, until the climactic sermon of Stephen, under the Spirit of God, ended in his martyrdom, when the message of the Messiah was finally rejected by the Jews (Acts 7).

7. SCOPE OF SIXFOLD ACCOMPLISHMENT.—Mention has been made concerning the prophesied six events that were to occur in the "midst" of that fateful seventieth week of years. These results all impinge upon the supreme event of our Lord's death (Dan. 9:25), and have to do with His first, and not His second, advent. The sacrificial death of the Messiah is foundational, and is the climactic event of this prophecy. And these six accomplishments grow out of that accomplished fact. Note them:

(1) *To finish the transgression* (verse 24). The

thought in this phrase is that of bringing transgression to the full. The filling up of the cup of iniquity by the Jews was referred to by our Lord, who said, "Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers" (Matt. 23:32; compare Gen. 15:16). Their crowning sin was, of course, the rejection and the crucifixion of the Messiah. Thus the nation passed the line of no return. "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate," declared Jesus (Matt. 23:38). This fulfilled the Master's prophecy, "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" (Matt. 21:43).

(2) *To make an end of sins, or sin offerings* (*chatta'th*; compare Lev. 4:3, 21, 24, 32). When the great offering was made on Calvary, and the Lamb of God, the true Sacrifice, was slain to take away the sin of the world (John 1:29), that brought to an end the ceremonial sin offerings. Daniel 9:27 says, "He shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease." The Temple veil was rent when Jesus died. At Calvary the ceremonial sin offerings ceased to have any efficacy, and soon they ceased entirely.

(3) *To make reconciliation for iniquity.* By the death of the Son of God, full sacrificial atonement was made for the redemption of a lost world. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Cor. 5:19). Peace was made through the blood of the cross (Col. 1:20). We were reconciled to God by the death of His Son (Rom. 5:10), and with the apostles we "rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received our reconciliation" (verse 11, R.S.V.).

complete unity and harmony of all component subdivisions.

8. SEVENTIETH "WEEK" CONFIRMS COVENANT.—Two different renderings of Daniel 9:27 are current. One states that "he shall confirm the covenant" (K.J.V.); the other, taking "week" as the subject, reads, "*One week* shall establish the covenant" (LXX, Theodotion's Greek version). There appears to be about equal linguistic support for each rendering—one Hebraist referring to it as a fifty-fifty division of determinative evidence. The historic Protestant position applies the "he" to Christ.

The other translation, "One week shall establish the covenant," is based on Theodotion's rendering. And such a rendering has definite scholarly support. Zöckler (*Lange's Commentary*, on Dan. 9:27) lists Hävernick, Hengstenberg, Auberlen, Dereser, Von Lengerke, Hitzig, Rosenmüller, and Hofmann as regarding "one week" as the subject. Keil (*op cit.*, p. 365) states that "many" hold this view, and lists some of the same names. Young names two who hold this view (*The Prophecy of Daniel*, p. 208). And Biederwolf (*The Millennium Bible*, p. 223), while not accepting the view himself, admits, "Many authorities take the word 'week' to be the subject of the sentence—'one week shall confirm the covenant to many.' "

This last week, we believe, was to be marked by the supreme event of the ages—the redemptive death of Jesus Christ. That which was accomplished during that final "week," or *hebdomad*, confirmed the new covenant, and caused the cessation of the entire system of sacrifices appointed for Old Testament times, by the

offering of Christ as the once-for-all and all-sufficient sacrifice for sins.

Christ is the one who confirms the new covenant by His death. So, irrespective of the subject—"he" or "week"—Christ is the central figure in that seventieth week. And whether the emphasis is on Christ Himself, who confirms the covenant, or whether it is on the week in which tremendous events occur, centering in Christ and the transaction of Calvary which confirms the covenant, Christ remains the central figure of verse 27. This position gives to the last week of the seventy the importance it should have, and which the prophecy as a whole demands, inasmuch as all the predictions of verse 24 depend on the concomitant events of that last fateful week.

Another fundamental point in the text is that the duration of this covenant would not be merely "*for*" one week, but that the covenant would be, and was, confirmed forever at a historic point *in* this last *hebdomad*. And this covenant—God's everlasting covenant—was confirmed by the blood of the divine Son of God (Heb. 13:20), when He gave Himself for the sins of the world "in the midst of the week."

9. TERMINUS OF SEVENTIETH HEBDOMAD.—Expositors have long sought for some incontrovertible event to mark the close of the seventy weeks of years of verse 27. Not a few have suggested the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7). But this is variously dated as occurring in A.D. 32, 33, or 34. Others have considered the conversion of Saul (Acts 9), or the declaration, "Lo, we turn to the Gentiles" (Acts 13:46). The timing of these episodes, however, is not at all certain. In this con-

nection the question arises, Is it really necessary to pinpoint some event as marking the close of the 70 weeks? No specific event is predicted in the prophecy, and it would therefore seem that no historic event is actually called for to indicate its close.

Consider the form and emphasis of this unique prophecy. In the 70 "weeks of years"—totaling 490 years, as generally conceded—the stress is not placed on the individual component years, as such, but upon 70 *units of seven years*. These units are commonly called *hebdomads* (from the Greek *hebdomas*, a group of 7), or *heptads* (with the same meaning). There are, as noted, 70 of these *hebdomads* in the prophecy, clustered into three groups—7, 62, and 1—together constituting the 70. The prophecy deals with events to occur in each of these major clusters, or divisions: The 7 *hebdomads* (totaling 49 years) and the 62 (equaling 434 years) together make 69 *hebdomads* (483 years), before coming to the seventieth *hebdomad*, or last unit of 7 years. Young has interestingly emphasized that the prophecy is "besevened" into these 7-year units, with certain things to take place in each major segment.

When so regarded, it will be seen that all 70 *hebdomads* are fully accounted for when the events of the "midst" of the seventieth or last *hebdomad* took place historically. The fraction of the seventieth *hebdomad* remaining after the death, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord was then no longer a matter of material consequence. The terms of the prophecy called for a cluster of seven events (six in verse 24 and one in verse 27), all to take place in the "midst" of

the last, or seventieth, *hebdomad*. And these all occurred at the scheduled time. *But*, we repeat, *no predicted event is called for to mark the close of the last unit*. The first 69 *hebdomads* reach to the manifestation of the Messiah, and the seventieth—the one remaining *hebdomad*—is accounted for as a unit by the events clustering about Calvary, occurring in its “midst.” If some event were to take place at midday on a specified day, and it occurred at noon on that precise day, would not the expectation be perfectly fulfilled, irrespective of what happened during, or at the close of, the remaining half of the day?

Thus it was, we believe, with the seventieth *hebdomad*, or unit of 7, in the series of 70. The exact dating, or starting point, of the first *hebdomad* of the entire series of 70 has been established as 457 B.C. That is vital. And the beginning year of the last *hebdomad* (A.D. 27) is likewise known. Having these known factors, there can be no mistake in calculating the time of the events to occur in the “midst” of the seventieth *hebdomad*, which is the focal point of the entire prophecy.

So, although various expositors (such as Hales, Tanner, Taylor, et cetera) suggest the martyrdom of Stephen as the closing event of the seventieth week—and such might be quite reasonable—no historical mark is actually necessary, and possibly none can be pointed out with certainty. We therefore recognize the seventieth *hebdomad* as having its fundamental emphasis on the transcendent event of Christ’s death, along with the six great corollaries, all clustered in the “midst” of the last *hebdomad*.

10. FURTHER WOES TO FALL UPON THE JEWS.—Next is foretold the appalling adversities to follow, after the close of the 70 weeks. These came as a consequence of the Jewish rejection of the Messiah, and involved the destruction of the Temple, the razing of the city of Jerusalem, the scattering of the Jewish people, and a succession of calamities sweeping over Jerusalem like a flood of desolation (Dan. 9:26). The exact time was not predicted, but the events would take place *after* the 70 weeks of years had closed, by A.D. 34. And it should be particularly noted that this tragic visitation was *not* one of the specified acts that were to mark the seventieth week—finishing the transgression, making an end of sins, making reconciliation, bringing in everlasting righteousness, sealing the vision, and anointing the most holy. It was the fearful aftermath and inevitable consequence of Israel's rejection of their Messiah.

The dread “abomination of desolation,” spoken of by Daniel the prophet, was referred to by Christ Himself in His own great prophecy: “When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand)” (Matt. 24:15-20; compare Mark 13:14). This is more fully explained by the words, “When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh” (Luke 21:20). Hundreds of thousands were slain, tens of thousands sold into slavery, and war followed upon war.

11. FEARFUL PUNISHMENT COMES TO JERUSALEM.—Christ Himself, in foretelling the utter destruction and desolation to come upon Jerusalem because of her

mounting iniquities, declared, "Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation" (Matt. 23:36). These prophesied judgments upon Jerusalem and the Temple fell *beyond* the close of the 70 weeks, but within the generation specified. They were the inevitable consequence of the supreme sin of Israel in their rejection of the Messiah. Thus their cup of iniquity was filled (verse 32). As our Lord looked into the immediate future, He wept over the city, saying:

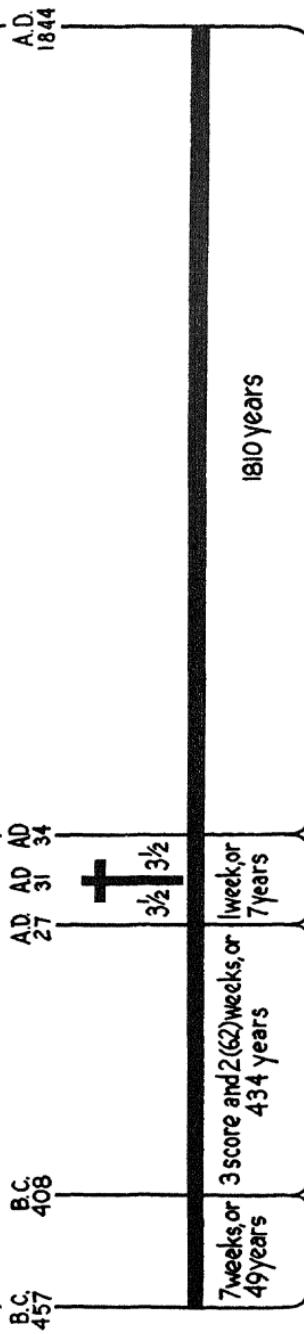
If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation (Luke 19:42-44).

Beginning in A.D. 66, wars broke out between the Jews and the Romans, reaching their climax in A.D. 70. The Temple was no longer the dwelling place of God, and its earthly sacrifices had lost their significance. The Zealots were denounced by Josephus as the direct cause of the destruction (*Wars* iv. 3. 3). These *sicarii* ("assassins") desecrated everything that was holy, and their activities were characterized by atrocities, profanity, and violence. The consummation ended in utter destruction.

A few days before the A.D. 70 Passover, the Roman destroyers, under Titus, came to Jerusalem. They attacked the city and soon breached the wall. The city was overwhelmed. As the Temple precincts were entered, the daily sacrifices were stopped. The Temple was fired and destroyed, and the Jews ruthlessly slaugh-

"UNTO 2300 DAYS ; THEN SHALL THE SANCTUARY BE CLEANSED"  
2300 YEARS

"70 WEEKS ARE DETERMINED UPON THY PEOPLE"  
490 YEARS



THE 2300 DAYS

tered—their blood, according to Josephus, flowing in streams down the steps. The desolater had come. The city and Temple were in ruins; the desolation accomplished.

12. TIE-IN OF 70 WEEKS AND 2300 DAYS.—Because of the fact that the crucifixion of Christ in the midst of the week definitely proves the correct beginning of the 70 weeks, and because the 70 weeks were cut off from the 2300 days, we therefore hold that the two periods began synchronously at the full restoration of Jerusalem and the sanctuary-temple, and of the Jewish laws and government, in 457 b.c. Numerous other expositors have taken 457 b.c. as the determinative date. The late Dr. James Strong, of Drew Theological Seminary, English translator and reviser of Zöckler (*Lange's Commentary*, on Dan 9:24-27), says: "The only 'command' answering to that of verse 25 is that of Artaxerxes Longimanus, issued in the seventh year of his reign, and recorded in the seventh chapter of Ezra, as Prideaux has abundantly shown, and as many critics agree."\*

To this scores upon scores of scholars in various lands and of many faiths, from the time of Johann Petri, of Germany, in 1768 onward, were in full but independent agreement. (See historical evidence presented in Question 27.)

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\*Funck, Nigrinus, Bullinger, Cocceius, Sir Isaac Newton, Cappel, Horch, Bengal, Petri were among the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Reformation and post-Reformation leaders who took the seventh year of Artaxerxes date (457 b.c.).

Early nineteenth-century Old World writers include Prideaux, Faber, T. Scott, A. Clarke, Cunningham, Mason, Brown, Fry, White, Cooper, Homan, Keyworth, Addis, Hoare, Digby, Keith, Habershon, Bickersteth, Gausen. And New World early-nineteenth-century expositors include Boudinot, R. Scott, Livermore, Wheeler, Shannon, Tyng, Hinton.

Among more recent scholars may be listed Jamieson, Faucett and Brown, Rule, Pusey, Auberlen, Blackstone, Leathes, Tanner, and Boutflower.

# The Seventieth Week of Daniel 9 and the Gap Theory

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## QUESTION 26

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*Why do Adventists hold that the seventieth week of years of Daniel 9 follows immediately upon the close of the sixty-ninth week of years? Did not Hippolytus and Apollinaris, back in the third and fourth centuries, introduce a break, or gap? On what basis do you differ with those present-day fundamentalists who hold that the seventieth week is separated by a vast gap of over nineteen centuries and will not be fulfilled until the end of the age, and that it pertains to the acts of antichrist rather than to those of Christ? Are you not practically alone in your view?*

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Answering the last question first, we are by no means alone. While Seventh-day Adventists differ on this point with many (but by no means all) fundamentalists of today, we are in accord with the outstanding scholars of the centuries—early church, medieval Catholic and Jewish, Protestant Reformation, and post-Reformation. And until the upsurge of dispensationalism in the past few decades, most conservative modern

scholars\* held, as we still hold, to the seventy weeks of years as an uninterrupted, continuous unit.

But to return to the first three questions. A satisfactory answer to these queries would require us to go into many aspects of Bible prophecy, and into the whole philosophy with which we approach the predictive portions of the Scriptures. It would require us to show what we believe to be the weaknesses and fallacies of the gap theory, as well as its concomitant basic philosophy—the futurist interpretation of prophecy, of which it is a part. There is not space within the assigned limits of this question to deal with all these ramifications.

We should explain that we have accepted the historical school interpretation of prophecy, believing it to be the philosophy of prophecy set forth in the Scriptures. Therefore we cannot accept the theories of a separated week, a long gap during which prophecy does not apply, and a future antichrist at the end of the age. These theories are based on principles of interpretation that

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\*Those who accept this interpretation that connects the seventieth week with the Messiah include:

Early Church Fathers.—Tertullian, Eusebius, Athanasius, Cyril of Jerusalem, Polychronius, and Augustine.

Medieval Christian writers.—The Venerable Bede, Thomas Aquinas, and Arnold of Villanova.

Pre-Reformation leaders.—Wycliffe and Brute, together with such Reformers as Luther, Melanchthon, Funck, Selnecker, Nigrinus, and Heinrich Bullinger.

Post-Reformation scholars.—Joseph Mede, Sir Isaac Newton, William Whiston, Johann Bengel, Humphrey Prideaux, John Blair, and James Ferguson.

Nineteenth-century Old World expositors.—Jean de la Fléchère, William Hales, George Faber, Thomas Scott, Adam Clarke, Thomas Horne, Archibald Mason, John Brown, John Fry, Thomas White, Edward Cooper, Thomas Keyworth, Alfred Addis, William Pym, Daniel Wilson, Alexander Keith, Matthew Habershon, Edward Bickersteth, and Louis Gaussen, as well as the later Hävernick, Hengstenberg, and Pusey.

Nineteenth-century American expositors.—Elias Boudinot, William Davis, Moderator Joshua Wilson, Samuel McCorkle, Robert Reid, Alexander Campbell, José de Rozas (Mexico), Adam Burwell (Canada), Robert Scott, Stephen Tyng, Isaac Hinton, Richard Shimeall, James Shannon, and John Robinson.

And in more recent times we might add C. H. H. Wright, R. D. Wilson, Boutflower, and others too numerous to mention. Adventists therefore have a host of illustrious predecessors for their position.

we reject as unscriptural. In the interests of brevity we shall confine our answer to the first two points mentioned in the questions.

1. **THE SEVENTIETH WEEK OF YEARS FOLLOWS THE SIXTY-NINTH WEEK.**—We believe, in common with the great group of godly scholars mentioned in the footnote, that the 70-weeks prophecy climaxes with the manifestation of Jesus Christ as the true Messiah, and then seals the inerrancy of the outline with a portrayal of the atoning death of Christ. All this was outlined by inspiration five hundred years prior to those tremendous transactions that changed the entire course of human history. And this is *most conclusive in proving Jesus Christ to be the true and only Messiah, and in setting forth the wondrous provisions of complete redemption in and through Him.*

The 70 “sevens” of years “determined,” or measured out and set apart in the councils of heaven, for this prophecy, had a specified starting point. (See Question 25, p. 278). These 70 *hebdomads* were divided into three groups—of 7, 62, and 1—totaling 490 years.

“Know therefore and understand” (Dan. 9:25), was the admonition of the prophecy, that 69 *hebdomads*, or units of 7 years, were to pass between the “commandment” and the manifestation of Messiah the Prince—that is, 7 plus 62 weeks of years, or 483 years. The 69 weeks therefore simply constitute the time that must elapse from a designated point. While the passing years of the 69 *hebdomads* are important, *it is the seventieth hebdomad that is all-important*. The 69 weeks of years constitute the precise length of time to the manifestation of Jesus as Messiah, as seen in Ques-

tion 25. It is therefore logical that the seventieth week refers to the 7 years following the 69th, that is, to the period in which the Messiah's ministry took place. The wording of the text in no way indicates a break or gap.

Most of the older expositors, who make the baptism of Jesus the terminus of the 69 weeks of years, recognize the "one week" of years as following immediately, *without a break*—the crucifixion taking place  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years later, in the "midst" of the seventieth week of years. Such scholars recognized the remaining  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years of the last week as pertaining to the founding of Christianity through the preaching of the disciples. Since neither wording nor logic indicates a gap, the burden of proof rests on those who would break the continuity of the period.

God's designated measuring line for this 70-weeks prophecy is of "determined" or allotted length, to be measured from a clearly established historical landmark. And the obvious purpose of the prophecy is to foretell the time of the occurrence of certain matters of supreme moment—things to occur in the last, or seventieth, *hebdomad* of the series. Hence, to postpone that final week of years and project it far into the future is in reality to obscure the time element, one of the main points of the entire prophecy, and thus do violence to its obvious intent.

To insert into a 490-year period a "gap" of two thousand years, four times longer than the entire 70 weeks itself, constitutes unwarranted manipulation. It changes the prophetic measuring line into an elastic band. Those who follow such a procedure have abandoned a measuring line of "*determined*" length for one

of wholly *indeterminate length*, and have made it a vast nondescript period totally foreign to this specific prophecy.

Those holding the gap theory, who make the separated last week the period of final crisis at the end of the age, must perforce add a hiatus of two thousand years. This is a form of exegesis without a precedent\* in all prophetic exposition.

Since 7 plus 62 weeks lead to the Messiah, we should logically conclude that Christ's public ministry, as Messiah, lay *beyond* the sixty-ninth week—yet *within* the seventieth week, as numbered consecutively. This has been the predominant view of Christian scholarship through the centuries.

With relatively few exceptions, expositors have taken the two separately mentioned periods of the 7 weeks and the 62 (together making 69 weeks of years, or 483 years) without inserting any gap between them. But the gap advocates say that the seventieth week of years, numbered from the starting point, was *not* the seventieth week of prophecy in sequence. That is clearly the crux of the issue.

It is not Seventh-day Adventists who, in these latter times, have departed from the historic view of the centuries on the seventy weeks of years. We continue to

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\*The argument is sometimes advanced that, according to Luke 4:16-21, when Christ, at the outset of His ministry, was reading in the synagogue from the prophecy of Isaiah concerning His own designated work, He stopped reading in the midst of the passage, and did not include the "day of vengeance" to come in the future at the end of the age. That is true; but the case is totally different. Isaiah was not setting forth a measure of time, which is the issue in the prophecy of the 70 weeks. Jesus simply declared that *that part of the prophecy He had just read was even then being fulfilled*. He was dealing only with the present, which was being accomplished before their eyes. That was all. The rest was indeed future, for Isaiah had recorded a sweeping outline of events that *covers the entire age*, extending to the great consummation.

hold the centuries-old, orthodox position of Protestantism, but we do not base our belief on historical precedent. We recognize that the gap theory, which applies this prophecy to a future antichrist, is an unwitting outgrowth of the counter-Reformation of the sixteenth century. It is our profound conviction that the system based on the separated week is an unwarranted innovation.

We believe that it is incumbent upon us to adhere undeviatingly to sound, unimpeachable principles of prophetic interpretation. To us there appears to be no valid reason, or defensible ground, for separating the seventieth week from the 69. The 7 weeks and the 62 weeks run on continuously without a break. And we find no justifiable basis, exegetical or otherwise, for separating the seventieth week from the sixty-ninth and arbitrarily placing it down at the end of the age. There is assuredly no precedent for it in paralleling prophetic interpretation. Neither is there anything in the Hebrew text of Daniel to warrant it, or in the Greek LXX.

It seems abundantly clear to us that the specifications of the prophecy find exact and complete fulfillment in the life, ministry, and death of Christ, and in the subsequent desolation of the Jewish nation as a result of their rejection of the promised Messiah.

When we reckon from the decree of Artaxerxes I, given to Ezra (457 B.C.), to the end of 69 weeks of years (A.D. 27), with the ministry of Christ beginning with His "anointing" at His baptism, and His death taking place in the midst of the seventieth week (which ends the 490 years, in A.D. 34), there is perfect harmony

between the prophetic specifications and the historical fulfillments.

The sixfold specifications of the prophecy that were to be accomplished within the 70 weeks were completely fulfilled in the work of Christ and His sacrificial death on the cross. These all actually took place in the week of years immediately following A.D. 27. They have been discussed at length in the answer to Question 25, and will not be repeated here.

The desolation of the Jewish nation, though delayed by divine mercy for some years after the close of the 490-year period allotted to the Jews, exactly fulfilled the specifications of the prophecy when the Roman armies destroyed the Temple and the city of Jerusalem and dispersed the Jews in A.D. 70.

The entire 70-weeks prophecy finds fulfillment in the ministry, rejection, and death of the Messiah, in the ending of the period allotted to the Jews, in the confirmation of the covenant by the blood of Christ, and in the inauguration of the heavenly ministry for all believers, both Jew and Gentile, under the new covenant. In view of the perfect fulfillment of all the prophetic specifications in the period of the 70 consecutive weeks of years, we find no reason whatever for cutting off the last week and relating it to the end of the age.

**2. BASIC FALLACY OF APPEAL TO EARLY CHURCH PROGENITORS.**—The appeal by modern adherents of the gap theory to such writers as Hippolytus of Portus Romanus (third century) or Apollinaris of Laodicea (fourth century) necessitates an inquiry into the basis of this contention.

In the first place, these two expositors (whose views were not those of the majority in the early church) had in their 70-weeks interpretation obviously divergent elements that are admittedly not followed by those who look to them as progenitors of the present futurist views. Take Hippolytus, for example: In projecting a gap into the 70 *hebdomads*, he construed the first 69 units, or weeks of years, as reaching from the first year of Cyrus (or of Darius the Mede) to the incarnation of Christ—a chronological impossibility without elongating the period. Of course those who cite Hippolytus for the gap interpretation do not follow the details of his theory, such as his erroneous elongation of the 69 weeks, any more than they accept his expectation of the Second Advent about A.D. 500. But they appeal to Hippolytus and others in support of an early-church origin of their futurist theory of the 70 weeks. However, to base futurism, as the word is understood today, on the views of the early church is to make an unsound use of historical precedent; to employ such “historical foundations” is to build it on shifting, sinking sands. The early Christian view of eschatology was not truly futurism. The historicists have the better claim to kinship with the primitive church.

The belief of the early Christians that most of the prophecies were yet unfulfilled in their day does not make them futurists in the ordinarily understood meaning of the word. Futurism is the view, not that most of the prophecies were in the future at the *beginning* of the Christian Era, but that they will still be in the future at the *end* of the Christian Era. Historicists believe that there was necessarily a time when the bulk

of the prophecies were yet unfulfilled, and that eventually there will be a time when they will all be fulfilled. The difference is that the historicist looks for the fulfillment as progressively unfolding in history until the end, while the futurist makes the Christian age a "parenthesis," or a gap, in prophetic fulfillment and postpones further fulfillment to a comparatively brief time in the end, *beginning* with the coming of Christ for His saints. There are many variations among futurists, but we may summarize their characteristic views.

- a. That the greater part of the prophecies (including Daniel's fourth kingdom and seventieth week, and all of Revelation except the letters to the seven churches) await fulfillment in the time after Christ's coming to resurrect and translate the saints.
- b. That the entire "church age" is a gap during which the prophetic clock has stopped ticking.
- c. That all time prophecies are in literal time (the year-day principle is denied).
- d. That "Israel" throughout the Bible always refers to literal Jews.
- e. That the Old Testament prophecies and promises of the glorious rule of God's people must be fulfilled unconditionally and literally to the restored Jews, who are expected to reign over the unconverted and untransformed nations during the millennium.
- f. That the antichrist is a future person, a God-opposing tyrant, who will oppress the Jews and bring upon the world (the returned Jews, the Gentile nations, and apostate Christendom) a  $3\frac{1}{2}$ -year tribulation during the latter half of a delayed seventieth *hebdomad*, after the second advent.

g. That before this tribulation the “rapture,” or resurrection and translation of the saints, will remove the church from the earth (secretly, as most believe).

h. That the Jews will be, even during the millennium, completely separate from the Christian church.

i. That not only the bulk of prophecy but other considerable portions of the Bible, including the largest part of the Gospels, belong to other ages and not to the church. (This is part of an elaborate system of “dispensations” prominent in futurist writings.)

Without examining the correctness or incorrectness of these points, let us examine the early church views on these subjects. The early church was premillennialist, but premillennialism is not necessarily equivalent to futurism, as so many—both futurists and their opponents—assume today.

a. The early Christians did indeed place a considerable proportion of the prophecies in the future (for the obvious reason that the infant church, standing at the threshold of the book of Revelation, lived in the very beginning of fulfillment). And they placed most of the future fulfillments in the last days, because they expected the last days very soon. But they did not put the fourth kingdom, the beasts of Revelation, the anti-christ, and the great tribulation after the return of Christ and the first resurrection.

b. They did not see the “church age” as a parenthesis in prophecy or as an interruption of a Jewish age that was to be resumed and completed without the church in the future. They found themselves in the midst of prophetic fulfillments—under the fourth kingdom, which they expected to be followed by the

breakup of the Roman Empire and the rise of anti-christ, all of which would lead to the second advent and the kingdom. They saw continuity in prophecy and history from the Old Testament times down to the end.

*c.* It is true that they took such prophetic periods as the 1260 days, et cetera, as literal time. This was natural, since they did not expect the world to last 1260 years.

*d.* They considered literal Israel as no longer entitled to the kingdom that she had rejected along with her Messiah, and believed that the true Israel was henceforth spiritual Israel, the church.

*e.* They pictured an earthly rule over the unregenerate nations during the millennium—this, embellished with details of plenty and prosperity, they had inherited from the Jewish apocalypticists—but they differed from both the Jewish apocalypticists and the modern futurists in that the kingdom was to be that of the Christian saints, not of the Jews.

*f.* They agreed with the Jewish apocalyptic (and also the futurist) view of antichrist as an individual tyrant in power for  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years. Some of them applied the time of antichrist to the second half of a delayed seventieth week, but this was not the majority view; many expositors ended the 70 weeks at or near the close of Christ's life on earth. It should be remembered that those who had a "gap" in the 70 weeks had quite a different concept from the present futurists, for they expected only a short interval until the end; they never dreamed of such an anomaly as a 490-year period with a 2,000-year break in it.

g. They placed the great tribulation (under the antichrist-beast-little-horn) before the first resurrection, and consequently they expected the church to be on earth during that period. They saw it as the next development in history following the expected breakup of the then-present Roman Empire, and thus preceding the coming of Christ.

h. They believed that Christ was to rule the earth during the millennium through the church—the redeemed saints from among both Jews and Gentiles—not through the Jews as a separate chosen people outside the church.

i. They did not separate the Scriptures into dispensational compartments that assigned the epistles to the church, the bulk of the Gospels to the Jewish age, et cetera. They claimed the Gospels as foundational and saw their own tribulations in the book of Revelation.

To what extent, then, were those early-church views inherited by the futurists? Out of nine points there is complete agreement only on *c*, and incomplete on *f*. We may include partial agreement on two more: on *a* in so far as the early church placed more prophecies near the end of time, since they expected the end shortly, and on *e* in so far as they expected a literal, earthly millennial kingdom. But *a* and *e* must be listed also as points of major *difference*, since there is a great cleavage between mere future fulfillments and a cessation of fulfillment until after the coming of Jesus and the resurrection; also between a reign of the regenerate saints and that of the Jewish nation. In addition we find clear disagreement on *b*, *d*, *g*, *h*, and *i*. These findings are decidedly against calling the early

church futurist or regarding the futurist views as derived from early premillennialism.

How, then, shall we classify the view of the early Christians? It was the so-called "continuous-historical," or historicist. Having already applied some of Daniel's prophecies historically, the believers naturally continued to apply further prophetic events in the same way. Living under the fourth empire, they awaited Rome's division; already they saw the working of the approaching falling away that was to lead to antichrist. Thus they saw prophecy developing step by step in history—though not in long-term historical development, since they did not expect a long history of the world. But aside from the length of the process, their method was exactly that of the historicist interpretation—the interpretation that finds in prophecy an outline of history, in the New Testament the continuation and fulfillment of the Old Testament, and in the Christian church the heir of the promises and prophecies of both Testaments.

We believe that the early church had the right method; their errors lay in the chiliastic misconception of the kingdom and their tyrant-antichrist notions, both inherited from Jewish apocalypticism, and in their short-range view of the time element. These were errors of the age, and their correction, as time went on, required no basic shift in approach. The early church laid down the principles of historicist premillennialism.

# Scholarly Precedents for 1844

## Ending of 2300 Year-Days

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### QUESTION 27

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*What scholarly support can Seventh-day Adventists cite for holding, not only that the 2300 days of Daniel 8:14 are symbolic and therefore stand for 2300 actual years in fulfillment, but especially that they end in 1844? Does not your position differ from both fundamentalists and modernists, as well as from Jews and Roman Catholics? Was not your variant concept an innovation first devised by a layman, William Miller? What reputable scholars, if any, have ever supported such a conclusion?*

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We believe our view to be the logical conclusion and climax of nearly a thousand years of progressive application of the year-day principle to the symbolic time periods of Bible prophecy. Its progenitors and champions have embraced literally hundreds of illustrious Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant scholars. The intent of the 2300 days of Daniel 8:14 has intrigued men for more than a thousand years.

There are seven progressive steps, or principal advances, that form the historical antecedents of our present position. These compass two millenniums and include some of the greatest scholars of the centuries, as

well as involving all major faiths. (The digest that follows is based upon complete documentary evidence appearing in the four-volume set *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, by L. E. Froom.)

1. **EARLY CHURCH STRESSED SEVENTY WEEKS OF YEARS.**—Early churchmen expounded the 70 weeks of Daniel 9 as weeks of years, or 490 years. These included Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Julius Africanus, Eusebius Pamphili, Athanasius, Cyril of Jerusalem, Theodoret, Polychronius, Isidore of Pelusium, Theodosius, Miletenus, Andronicus, and Prosper of Aquitaine. And this position has long been the general view among both Catholics and Protestants.

2. **YEAR-DAY PRINCIPLE APPLIED BY MEDIEVAL JEWS TO ALL SYMBOLIC TIME PERIODS.**—Medieval Jewish scholars were the first to apply the year-day principle to the day periods of Daniel—the 1290, 1335, and 2300—as year-days, leading to the “far-off days,” at the “time of the end.” Beginning with ninth-century Nahawendi, and then tenth-century Saadia, Jeroham, and Hakohen, we come to eleventh-century Rashi, who regarded the 2300 as full years. Then we find four twelfth-century and two thirteenth-century scholars, including Nahmanides, teaching the same. And three fourteenth-century rabbis, Abravanel in the fifteenth century, and others in the sixteenth century, paralleling the Protestant Reformation, provide a total of twenty-one Jewish expositors, spread over Palestine, Persia, Syria, Babylon, France, Spain, Algeria, Portugal, Italy, Turkey, Poland, and Germany.

3. **MEDIEVAL CATHOLIC SCHOLARS PARALLEL JEWISH YEAR-DAY RECKONING.**—Beginning in 1190, with the

renowned Joachim of Floris, of Calabria, Italy, *the year-day principle was first applied to the 1260 days as the years of the symbolic woman, or church in the wilderness*. And in the thirteenth century Joachimite scholars in Italy, Spain, France, and Germany similarly applied the year-day principle to the 1260, 1290, 1335, and 2300 days. For example, about 1292 Arnold of Villanova said that *the 2300 days stand for 2300 years*, counting the period from the time of Daniel to the Second Advent. Here is his express statement: "When he says, 'two thousand three hundred days' it must be said that by days he understands years. . . . In that vision by days are understood years."

Better known to most church historians is the illustrious Nicholas Krebs of Cusa, Roman Catholic cardinal, scholar, philosopher, and theologian, who in 1452 declared that the 2300 year-days began in the time of Persia. His *Conjecture Concerning the Last Days* (1452) declares that the 2300 year-days extend from Persia to the consuming of sin at the Second Advent, possibly between 1700 and 1750.

4. CORRECT TERMINI OF SEVENTY WEEKS ESTABLISHED.—In the German Reformation Johann Funck (1564) *first correctly placed the seventy weeks (490 years) as reckoned from the seventh year of Artaxerxes, from 457 B.C. to A.D. 34*. In this he was soon followed by other Protestant scholars in various lands, such as Cappel in France, and Bullinger in Switzerland. Scores of interpreters have since held the Artaxerxes-decree date (457 B.C.) as the beginning of the seventy weeks of years. The list soon included Colonial American scholars as well. (A large group held the

same view in the early nineteenth century—in Britain, on the Continent, and in North America. And since then, such expositors as Döderlein, Franc, Geier, Pusey, Auberlen, Blackstone, Taylor, and Boutflower have concurred, as well as Roman Catholics such as Lempkin.)

5. **TILLINGHAST INCLUDES SEVENTY WEEKS WITHIN 2300.**—In the century after the Protestant Reformation, many Protestant expounders from English theologian George Downham (died 1634) to British barrister Edward King in 1798, declared the number 2300 involved the same number of years. John Tillinghast (died 1655) ended them at the second advent and the 1000-year reign of the saints. Tillinghast was *the first to assert the 70 weeks of years to be a lesser epoch within the larger period of the 2300 years*. He did not begin them together. But he declared the 70 weeks to belong within the 2300 years.

6. **2300 YEARS EMBRACES ALL LESSER PERIODS.**—Heinrich Horch of Germany declared *that the 2300 years is the master, over-all period, and includes all lesser time periods*. Thomas Beverley, of Britain, believed it led to the second advent, the end of the world, the resurrection, the breaking of antichrist, and the millennium. Brilliant scholars in Britain and Germany—such as Lowth, Whiston, Bishop Newton, Fletcher, Horch, and Giblehr—looked for the church's deliverance, the destruction of antichrist, the establishment of Christ's kingdom to follow upon the close of this period.

Some Colonial and early national American writers—such as Congregational theologian Cotton Mather,

Governor William Burnet, Episcopalian rector Richard Clarke, Postmaster General Samuel Osgood, and Harvard librarian James Winthrop—believed that the period would end with the fall of spiritual Babylon, the “rest that remains,” the kingdom of God, the world’s “midnight,” the smiting of the nations, the millennium, or the end of the world.

7. PETRI—2300 YEARS BEGIN JOINTLY WITH SEVENTY WEEKS.—Johann P. Petri (died 1792), Reformed pastor of Seckbach, Germany, in 1768 introduced the final step in the progressive and logical series of seven principles leading to the inevitable conclusion and climax—that the 490 years (70 weeks of years) are the first part of the 2300 years. He began them synchronously, 453 years before the birth of Christ—terminating the 490 years in A.D. 37, and the 2300 years in 1847. Hans Wood, of Ireland, likewise made the 70 weeks the first part of the 2300 years. Soon men on both sides of the Atlantic, in Africa, even in India and other countries, began to set forth their convictions in similar vein.

#### Scores in Early Nineteenth Century Fix on 1843, '44, or '47

In the first third of the nineteenth century a tremendous revival of study took place concerning the prophecies pertaining to the approaching end of the age. A number of European scholars in Britain, on the Continent, and even in India—from John A. Brown in 1810, to Birks in 1843—published their convictions that the 2300 years would end about 1843, '44, or '47. These three dates represent essentially the same reckoning, with the death of Christ in the midst, or at the end,

of the seventieth week of years, with the 2300 counted from the same starting point as the 70 weeks. The differences are mere matters of computation or of placing Christ's birth in 1 or 4 B.C.

In North America a paralleling group of scholars holding high posts in various denominations—all prior to William Miller—from William C. Davis (1810) on, likewise looked to 1843, '44, or '47 as destined to introduce some great event or period—the advent, the judgment scene, or the millennial reign of the saints, or the effusion of the Spirit preceding Christ's coming. These included Dr. Joshua L. Wilson, moderator of the Presbyterian General Assembly; Protestant Episcopal Bishop John P. K. Henshaw; Alexander Campbell, founder of the Disciples Church; several college presidents and professors, judges, congressmen, physicians, pastors of outstanding churches, and editors of several religious journals.

It is both interesting and significant that more than sixty men in the early nineteenth century, scattered over four continents, and located in twelve different countries—including even a Roman Catholic supreme court justice, José de Rozas of Mexico City—looked to 1843, '44, or '47 as the terminus of this epochal period. And nearly all of them published their expectations *before William Miller's first book appeared in Troy, New York, in 1836.*

Such is the impressive historical background, and scholarly non-Seventh-day Adventist precedent, revealed in the record. We consequently feel that our position—that the 2300 year-days of Daniel 8:14 extend from 457 B.C. to A.D. 1844—has ample precedent.

So, in common with many before us, we, as Adventists, hold that the closing date was to announce important events clustering around the great judgment day and the closing events of the age. (The basis of our fixing upon the 2300 years as extending from 457 B.C. to A.D. 1844 appears under Questions 24 and 25.)

### Ours Not a Discovery, but a Continuation

Our reason for accepting as rational, logical, and exegetically sound the interpretation that places the terminus of the 2300 years in 1844 is not based on the imposing array of scholarly expositors cited, but the fact remains that we have this supporting host of expositors, without a parallel in the annals of prophetic exposition.

That is why we feel that if we are to be censured, then, in simple fairness and justice, similar charges of unreasonableness should be placed against that illustrious company of accomplished Biblical scholars who have held essentially the same view, and who held honored posts in the leading Protestant communions. They are recognized, outstanding Christian scholars. And we, as Adventists, continue to take our place in that great line of serious-minded prophetic expositors of the centuries, clasping hands with the brilliant, godly company of exegetes before us. They are our spiritual ancestors in this exposition, and we their logical successors and continuators. If we find ourselves differing with most fundamentalists and all modernists, that is because they have abandoned the historicist position —the one group for futurism, and the other for premillenialism. Our view represents the position once held by

*their* spiritual ancestors. We do not base our doctrine on the authority of our predecessors; we find our own basis in a study of Scripture and a comparison of fulfillment in history. But we are here answering the question about our precedents in exposition, and we feel honored to stand in this distinguished line.

To conclude: From facts here adduced, it becomes evident that our position on the reckoning of the 2300 year-days is not an *innovation*. It is in harmony with positions long since held, but which others have let slip. It cannot rightly be called an *invention*, a *discovery*; it is, in reality, a continuation and *restoration* of prophetic truths and principles progressively adopted over the centuries. We are therefore not introducers of new positions, but are sincere champions of old historic positions developed by the Christian church of the ages.

# Antiochus Epiphanes and the Prophetic Specifications of Daniel

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## QUESTION 28

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*Why do Adventists reject the position, so widely held, that Antiochus Epiphanes fulfills the prophecy of the “little horn” of Daniel 7 or 8, or both, with his suppression of the Jewish sacrifices between 167 and 164 B.C., as the fulfillment of the predicted exploits and time period of the “little horn”?*

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The issue here raised is more complex, and far more fundamental, than might at first appear. Some apply to Antiochus Epiphanes the “little horn” symbol of Daniel 7, which became “more stout” than any other of the ten horns (verse 20), while others apply to him the “little horn” of Daniel 8, which became “exceeding great” (Dan. 8:9, 10). Still others seek to apply to Antiochus the little horns in both chapters. But these horns, as will be shown, are two separate symbols. They are not identical, and parallel each other only in part.

Numerous Bible scholars (such as Faussett, Auberlen, Zündel, Eberhardt, Hävernick, Hengstenberg, Scofield, Gaebelein, and Ironside) warn against confusing the “little horn” of Daniel 7 with the “little horn” of Daniel 8. Nevertheless, many continue to con-

fuse them, and thus become involved in irreconcilable difficulties.

Those who place Antiochus in Daniel 8 do not necessarily also hold the so-called "Porphyry theory" of Daniel 7, which makes Antiochus the little horn of a "Greek" fourth kingdom. There are also those who, on the basis of a partial or preliminary fulfillment of some aspects of the prophecy, have regarded Antiochus as a type, or forerunner, of the great persecuting Antichrist who was to realize the actual fulfillment centuries later. There has been, besides, an almost universal opinion that Antiochus has a legitimate place among the series of kings—Ptolemies and Seleucids—referred to in chapter 11, a literal prophecy that covers the period in which he attempted to suppress the true worship of God. To find him in that chapter, along with relatively unimportant rulers, is not at all the same as giving him the disproportionate importance that attaches to the Antiochus interpretation of the little horn of Daniel 7. These variations in interpretation must be kept distinct so as to avoid confusion.

1. GREEK AND ROMAN VIEWS OF THE FOURTH KINGDOM.—It should be noted that any identification of Antiochus as the little horn of chapter 7 is dependent on the identification of the fourth of Daniel's four world powers with the Macedonian (Grecian) period, rather than the Roman. The Greek and Roman views must be explained. The majority interpretation through the centuries has been that the fourth world power of Daniel 2 and 7 is Rome, and that the prophetic outlines portrayed in these chapters (as well as in chapters 8 and 9) reach to the end of time.

This was early taught by Josephus and other Jewish writers, and later by such early church expositors as pseudo-Barnabas, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Hippolytus, Eusebius, Aphrahat, Cyril, Chrysostom, Isidore, Sulpicius Severus, Jerome, and Theodoret. It was the virtually universal view of pre-Reformation, Reformation, and post-Reformation times. Beginning in the thirteenth century and from Reformation times onward, it had as a major corollary that the little horn of Daniel 7, springing out of the ten divisions of Rome, was the Papacy. Rome, in its pagan and/or papal phases, has likewise been said to be the "little" and later "exceeding great" horn of Daniel 8, though this is not necessarily a concomitant of the Roman view of the fourth kingdom. (Antiochus and, later, Mohammedanism have been seen in chapter 8 by holders of the Roman view.)

The Greek view was originally held only by Porphyry and a few others, but is championed today by a large number of exegetes, principally of the modernist school. This scheme assigns the fourth kingdom of Daniel 2 and 7 to the Greek, or Hellenistic, period—that is, either to Alexander and his successors or to the successors alone down to the time of the Roman Empire, with Antiochus Epiphanes, the persecuting Seleucid king,\* as the "little horn" that came up among the ten horns of the fourth beast of chapter 7. And many, even including some who make Rome the fourth empire, hold that Antiochus constitutes the "exceeding

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\*The Seleucid Empire was the easternmost of the four divisions of Alexander's empire. From the fact that its capital was Antioch in Syria, and that in later times it lost its eastern territory and shrank into Syria proper, it was also referred to as the Syrian Empire, or merely Syria.

great" horn springing out of one of the four horns of the Grecian goat of chapter 8, or is at least the type or forerunner of that horn.

This Grecian view, according to S. R. Driver, restricts the latter days "within the range of the writer" (of the prophecy of Daniel), and puts forth Antiochus Epiphanes as the "limiting horizon of the book." That is, everything in the book of Daniel (including chapters 2, 7, 8, 9, 11) is understood to have occurred *prior* to the Christian Era. On the contrary, under the Roman view, with Rome, pagan and papal, as the fourth world power, the deeds of the "little horn," whatever it may be, come entirely *after* the beginning of the Christian dispensation. One view clearly excludes the other.

2. NON-CHRISTIAN ORIGIN OF THE GRECIAN THEORY.—The origin of the Greek fourth kingdom is generally credited, not to a Christian exegete, but to a pagan, Porphyry, who died about A.D. 304. It was devised, not to expound, but to discredit and deny the prophetic element of the book of Daniel—not to confirm the Bible, but to deny its veracity. In short, as many scholars (such as Jerome of Antioch and Bishop Thomas Newton) have pointed out, it was a pagan's counterattack upon the inroads of Christian teachings in the pagan world—an avowedly defensive and fabricated claim that the book of Daniel was not written by the prophet Daniel in the sixth century B.C., but by a pseudo-Daniel in the second century B.C., in the time of the Maccabees.\* So he maintained that the book of

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\*Dr. Edward J. Young, of Westminster Theological Seminary (*The Prophecy of Daniel*, p. 5) observes: "One who claims that the book of Daniel is a product of the

Daniel was not a prophecy at all, as it claimed to be, but only a history written after the events. Thus he challenged its right to Christian acceptance and propagation. It was the accuracy of the historical fulfillment that made him say it must have been written *after* the events.

3. THE TWO FORMS OF THE GREEK VIEW.—There are two forms of the Greek view of Daniel's fourth kingdom, agreeing only on the first kingdom as Babylon and on the horns of the fourth as Hellenistic kings, with the little horn as Antiochus Epiphanes. The two series run:

1. Babylon	1. Babylon
2. Persia (Medes and Persians)	2. Media
3. Alexander's empire (during his lifetime)	3. Persia
4. Alexander's successors	4. Alexander and his successors

The first form, generally traced to Porphyry, was revived about 1600 and has had adherents down into the present century. The second, taught by Ephraim the Syrian and a few others, was not resurrected until the eighteenth century, but today it is quite widely held. (See H. H. Rowley, *Darius the Mede and the*

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Maccabean age thereby denies that it is a work of true predictive prophecy as it purports to be. Furthermore, if the book of Daniel comes from the age of the Maccabees, I do not see how it is possible to escape the conclusion that the book is also a forgery, for it claims to be a revelation from God to the Daniel who lived in Babylon during the exile.”

Porphyry challenged and disparaged the veracity and competency of the witness of Jesus Christ Himself, who cited Daniel as the author of the prophetic book bearing his name, and recognized the treatise to be an inspired prophecy (Matt. 24:15).

*Four World Empires in the Book of Daniel, for the differing views and their numerous variations.)*

The first form of this view ignores the unity of the Hellenistic period. From Alexander to the dominance of Rome the Hellenistic world was a single Greco-Macedonian-Oriental civilization molded by Greek language, thought, and political institutions, ruled by Macedonians, and thought of as a single empire long after Alexander's death, in spite of its political divisions. One historian says:

We may pause to note that the name of king [as applied to Seleucus] had no *territorial* reference. These kings [Alexander's successors] are never officially styled kings of *Egypt* or kings of *Asia*. If they are called so by historians, it is merely for the purpose of convenient distinction. It connoted rather a personal relation to the Macedonian people. *Ideally* there was one Macedonian Empire as in the Middle Ages there was one Roman Empire. But the dignity of Macedonian King was borne conjointly or concurrently by several chieftains, just as the dignity of Roman Emperor was borne concurrently by the Western and the Byzantine prince. *In practice*, of course, each of the rivals had to acquiesce in the others being kings within a certain territorial sphere. But their connexion with that sphere was never as close and essential as that of the king of England or the king of France with his territory. Ptolemy and Seleucid were to the end Macedonian kings who happened to reign in Egypt and in Asia.—  
EDWYN ROBERT BEVAN, *The House of Seleucus* (1902), vol. I, pp. 57, 58. (Italics in the original.)

Daniel indicates this unity by representing "Grecia" as one animal—a goat with horns, representing its first king *and his four successors*. Just so, Alexander's successors did not constitute a distinct kingdom that replaced its predecessors by conquest, as did the others; it was merely a continuation and development out of Alexander's rule. But in Daniel 2 and 7 the fourth

kingdom is not a later phase of the third; it is as distinct as the other three. Not only is the fourth beast separate, but it is even "diverse" from its predecessors. A Hellenistic fourth kingdom does not fit the specifications. If the four-headed leopard is Alexander's empire, who are the four heads if not his four successors, paralleling the goat's four horns in chapter 8? This first form of the Greek view does violence both to history and to Daniel's symbols.

The second series offers no better solution. True, there was a Median empire preceding the Persian, but it had been conquered by Cyrus some years before his conquest of Babylon. Hence it is historically impossible for it to be the second of the four kingdoms, following Babylon. Neither does the book of Daniel separate Median from Persian rule. The Babylonian kingdom is replaced by that of "the Medes and Persians" (Dan. 5:28); Darius the Mede enforces the laws of "the Medes and Persians" (Dan. 6:12); the combined rule of "Media and Persia"—symbolized by the single ram (Dan. 8:20)—is destroyed and replaced by the Grecian goat.

The older proponents of this second form of interpretation could place the rule of Cyrus in Babylon after the Median kingdom of Darius the Mede because they did not know, as we do now, that the conqueror Cyrus was recognized in Babylonian records as ruling immediately after the fall of the city. Modern proponents hold that Daniel's prophecy was written by a late pseudo-Daniel who ignorantly regarded Darius the Mede's reign as a separate kingdom preceding the Persian. We, who accept Daniel as a contemporary with Cyrus, can neither distort history nor assume that

Daniel was ignorant. But Darius the Mede is no more unhistorical than was Belshazzar before his status, long doubted, was corroborated from archeological finds in 1923. There is nothing to rule out the reign of Darius concurrent for a year or two (only his "first year" is mentioned) with the regnal years of Cyrus. This would be possible regardless of whether Darius is to be regarded as a subordinate king over Babylonia or as a "shadow king" over the empire, holding a courtesy title by sufferance of Cyrus, the actual head of the empire. Not only is an intermediate Median empire both unhistorical and unnecessary, but it does not fit the prophetic specifications. What about three ribs in a Median bear's mouth? Or the four heads of a Persian leopard?

Even more difficult is the Greek fourth kingdom—and the fifth. The interpretation of Antiochus as the little horn, plausible up to a point, breaks down in the end. Its inadequacy as to his deeds, his time period, and his relation to the ten horns and the three, is another topic. Where are the judgment and the fiery destruction resulting from his blasphemy? How was the Grecian kingdom succeeded by the kingdom of God sweeping away the kingdoms of the world? Indeed, present advocates of the Greek view point to these things as proof of the supposed Daniel's late date and his miscalculation of the future. On the other hand, the Roman view can be harmonized with both the prophetic specifications and the history of the Roman Empire and its continuation in the religio-political empire of the Papacy (see p. 335 and note).

4. SPECIFICATIONS OF DANIEL 7 NOT MET.—Sev-

enth-day Adventists reject the application of the little horn of Daniel 7 to Antiochus for a number of reasons:

*a.* Antiochus belonged to the third empire in actual historical sequence from Daniel's time (see p. 333).

*b.* The fourth beast had *ten* horns (verses 7, 19, 20), but the Greco-Macedonian beast, to which Antiochus belonged, had *four* divisions, which are pictured in chapter 8 as *four* horns. True, the two symbols need not necessarily agree, but the discrepancy is between the actual number of divisions that succeeded the original empire.

*c.* Antiochus did not rise after ten kings (verse 24). He was only eighth in the Seleucid (Syrian) line. Besides, the prophecy calls for contemporaneous, not successive, horns.

*d.* He was not "diverse" from his predecessors (verse 24).

*e.* It is impossible to find three out of ten kings who were "plucked up" or subdued before him (verses 8, 24); those who claim to do so, name mere aspirants who were never actual kings.\*

*f.* He was not stouter than the rest (verse 20); he

\*Note the inadequacy of the ten horns. In order to make Antiochus Epiphanes the eleventh horn in Daniel 7, champions of the Grecian view attempt to show *ten successive individual kings* of Syria, three of whom were to be plucked up from actual kingship. But ten bona fide Syrian kings cannot be found. Advocates of the varying lists often admit uncertainty and speak of historical obscurity, round numbers, and symbolical interpretations (Delitzsch, Hitzig, Hertzfeld, Zöckler).

Keil well remarks (*The Book of the Prophet Daniel*, p. 255) that the suggested interpretation is "shattered" by the simple fact that these horns must be found simultaneously on the head of the beast, not one after another. And Biederwolf (*The Millennium Bible*, "Daniel" pp. 207, 208) bluntly declares: "Those who make Antiochus Epiphanes the 'little horn' and the eleventh king, cannot find the first ten."

Zöckler (*Lange's Commentary*, on Daniel, p. 165) frankly admits of the three horns: "Every attempt to designate the three missing monarchs, who should fill the brief interregnum and state of restless anarchy which preceded the accession of Antiochus Epiphanes, results in failure." Noting the three customarily listed—Demeetrius, Heliodorus, and Ptolemy IV—he adds: "In point of fact, however, none of these rivals of Epiphanes could be regarded as the king of Syria, for Heliodorus was a mere usurper, who was dethroned after a brief reign, and there is no record to

was not the greatest of his line; his father, not he, was called Antiochus the Great.

*g.* It is true that he blasphemed God, changed laws of worship, and persecuted God's chosen people, but his persecution did not, as claimed, last three and one-half times (verse 25; see p. 330, Sec. 6).

*h.* He did not prevail until the judgment before the Ancient of Days, which was to be followed by the giving of the everlasting kingdom to the saints (verses 9-14, 26, 27).

*i.* His great words were not the cause of the destruction of the Greco-Macedonian beast, or empire (verse 11).

*j.* The kingdom following the Macedonian was the Roman, not the everlasting kingdom of the saints (verse 27).

*k.* Some assign this kingdom of the saints to the first advent of Christ in the next (i.e., the Roman) period. But the kingdom and dominion "under the whole heaven" was not set up then, and the kingdom of grace in the hearts of men does not fit the picture.

*l.* In a prophecy that sweeps in panorama from the Babylon of Daniel's day to the judgment and the kingdom of the saints, the brief and unsuccessful attempt of Antiochus to dominate the Jews would be magnified out of all proportion by the application of this little horn symbol. We look in vain for the tremendous events of the judgment and the setting up of the ever-

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show that either Demetrius or Ptolemy Philometer pretended to the throne with any degree of earnestness."

Furthermore, the kings, or kingdom, of Syria (embracing only one of four parts of the original Greek empire) could not qualify as horns of a beast representing the full Grecian power, as the alleged fourth empire.

lasting kingdom of God following the kingdom of Antiochus.

The conclusion is obvious that Antiochus does not fill the little-horn specifications, even the earlier ones, to say nothing of the closing depiction. This makes all the more evident the bankruptcy of the prevalent modernist interpretation based on the supposed ignorance of a second-century pseudo-Daniel writing pseudo-prophecy in or after the time of Antiochus. And since there is no possible candidate of the Macedonian period other than Antiochus, we must therefore conclude that the little horn of Daniel 7 cannot be Grecian, and the only alternative is a Roman horn (see p. 337).

5. SPECIFICATIONS OF DANIEL 8 NOT MET.—The view that makes Antiochus the little horn of Daniel 8, which becomes "exceeding great," must also be examined. There is a tempting plausibility in the fact that Antiochus did actually come "out of one of" the four horn-kingdoms on the head of the Greco-Macedonian goat. Nevertheless, even aside from the fact that there is a difference of opinion as to whether "out of one of them" means out of one of the horn-kingdoms or out of one of "the four winds" (verses 8, 9)—i.e., one of the four directions of the compass—there are obstacles to considering Antiochus an adequate fulfillment of the prophetic specifications.

a. In the first place, Antiochus was not a "horn." The four horns of the goat were "four kingdoms" (verse 22), the largest of which was the Seleucid (or Syrian) kingdom. Antiochus was not a separate horn, or kingdom, but one of the kings of the Seleucid horn, and hence a part of one of the horns.

*b.* Antiochus did not wax “exceeding great” (verse 9) in comparison with the Greco-Macedonian empire of Alexander (verse 8). Antiochus was not even the most powerful king of the Seleucid division of Alexander’s empire.

*c.* Antiochus hardly grew exceeding great through conquest (verse 9). His push to “the south” into Egypt was stopped by the mere word of a Roman officer; his expedition to “the east” resulted in his death; and his dominion of “the pleasant land” of Palestine did not last, for his persecution of the Jews drove them to resistance that later resulted in their independence.

*d.* The horn’s fury against “the host of heaven” (verse 10), who are evidently equated with “the mighty and the holy people” (verse 24), is plausibly a reference to Antiochus’ persecution of the Jews. However, if the specifications point rather to another power that also persecuted the people of God, this verse cannot be decisive.

*e.* Against what “prince of the host” (verse 11) or “Prince of princes” (verse 25) did Antiochus stand? A mere Jewish priest is hardly such a figure; “Prince of princes” could be only an unusual designation for God or Christ, whose worship he attacked.

*f.* Antiochus did take away the “daily sacrifice” to the true God, though he did not abolish the Temple sacrifices; he substituted others in honor of heathen gods. However, he only desecrated “the place of his sanctuary”; it was not “cast down” until the Romans destroyed it in A.D. 70.

*g.* His attempts to “cast down the truth” (verse 12)

were unsuccessful. The net result of his persecution was to strengthen the truth by uniting the Jews against the Hellenization of Judaism.

*h.* Though Antiochus was not a weak king, his ambitious policy can scarcely be said to have “practised, and prospered” (verses 12; compare verse 24), nor did his “craft . . . prosper in his hand” (verse 25) in attaining his ends.

*i.* The attempts to reckon the 2300 days (verse 14) as the literal period of Antiochus’ desecration of the Temple fail in making the chronology fit any of the sources (see p. 330, Sec. 6).

*j.* Antiochus did not reign “in the latter time of” the Hellenistic kingdoms of Alexander’s empire (verse 23), but nearly in the middle of the period.

*k.* Antiochus was “fierce” toward the Jews, but was not noted for “understanding dark sentences” (verse 23).

*l.* His “power” was not outstandingly “mighty,” nor can it be said that it was “not by his own power” (verse 24). At least such phrases give no particular confirmation to the identification of Antiochus.

*m.* Antiochus was not “broken without hand” (verse 25); there is no suggestion of anything miraculous or mysterious about either his failure with the Jews or his death.

*n.* To find, as some do, the Papacy as the little horn in chapter 7, and Antiochus as the little horn in chapter 8, is to throw the two prophecies out of balance —to interfere with the obvious parallel between the two series of world powers presented (see p. 335). If chapter 7 follows the sequence from Babylon—

through Persia, Alexander's empire, and his divided successors, on through the Roman Empire and the Papacy—down to the judgment, then chapter 8, which begins with Persia, one step later, should cover the same sequence—Persia, Alexander, the four horn-kingdoms that grew out of his empire, and then another horn, obviously another kingdom. To preserve the obvious parallel, this horn should logically be the next world power after the Hellenistic monarchies, namely Rome; and we should expect the scope of the prophecy to be similar to that of chapter 7, that is, extending to the end, when the horn would be broken without hand. (This does not mean that the two little horns are in all respects identical; see p. 337).

Although certain details of this prophecy of Daniel 8 might be considered applicable to the activities of Antiochus, yet the figure of that ruler, with his moderate successes and outstanding failures, is entirely too small to fill the picture.

**6. TIME SPECIFICATIONS FAIL FOR BOTH DANIEL 7 AND 8.**—The sources cited for the time specifications of both little horns are themselves in hopeless conflict. Thus, as to Daniel 7, the activities of Antiochus do not meet the time demands of the prophecy. Despite the claims of proponents to the contrary, according to 1 Maccabees 1:54, 59 and 4:52, Antiochus suppressed the Jewish sacrifices exactly three literal years. But this does not comport with the demand of Daniel 7:25 for three and one-half "times," which are generally recognized as involving 1260 prophetic days.\* Furthermore,

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\*The Protestant Reformation emphasis, and particularly that of post-Reformation times and later, was that these 1260 prophetic or symbolic days called for the

Josephus, two centuries later—in conflict with the Maccabean record—says (*Wars* i. 1. 1) that the episode lasted three and one-half years, though elsewhere (*Antiquities* xii. 7. 6) he contradicts himself by saying it was three years to the day! But more than that, he neutralizes both of these statements in his Preface to *Wars* when he imperturbably states that it was actually three years and three months. So one cancels out the others. There is thus hopeless conflict and contradiction in the sources themselves.

Furthermore, all attempts to equate the 1260 days of the little horn (of Dan. 7:24, 25) with the 2300 days, or “evenings-mornings,” of Daniel 8:14—or with 1150 days, if 2300 be divided by two, as some insist—are plainly forced. They constitute only an approximation, for 2300 days (or 1150) assuredly do not equal 1260. And conversely, the 1260 days of Daniel 7 certainly do not equate with the 2300 “half days,” or 1150 “full days,” of Daniel 8. One number cannot be accommodated to meet the demands of the others. That is too great a stretch—for the figures are not elastic. Quite apart from the year-day principle, fixing upon one number clearly rules out the others. So all are out, under such a scheme.

We concur with Bishop Thomas Newton (*Dissertations on the Prophecies*, 1796, p. 217), who in the eighteenth century wisely wrote:

These two thousand and three hundred days, can by no computation be accommodated to the times of Antiochus Epiphanes, even though the days be taken for natural days.

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same number of literal years in fulfillment. And the Reformers sought earnestly for the time of fulfillment—which, at the close of the eighteenth century, was widely recognized as being from the time of Justinian to the French Revolution.

And Dean F. W. Farrar, though personally holding the Antiochus theory, admits that "no minute certainty about the exact dates is attainable" (*The Book of Daniel*, 1895, p. 266). And he freely confesses, "By no reasonable supposition can we arrive at close accuracy." —*Ibid.*, p. 264.\*

And a half century ago Dr. Charles H. H. Wright, of Trinity College, Dublin and Oxford (*Daniel and His Prophecies*, 1906, p. 186), declared, on the 2300-day calculations of Daniel 8:

All efforts, however, to harmonise the period, whether expounded as 2300 days or as 1150 days, with any precise historical epoch mentioned in the Books of the Maccabees or in Josephus have proved futile.

Indeed, Dr. Wright goes so far as to say:

No satisfactory interpretation has been given of the 2300 days regarded as referring to Maccabean times. It is quite possible that those 2300 days may be a period of prophetic days or [literal] years which have still to run their course.—*Ibid.*, p. 190.†

But quite apart from these inconsistent and contrasting features as to the exact timing, the interpretation of the three and one-half times (1260 days), or the 2300 days, as simply that number of literal days

\*Zöckler (*Lange's Commentary*, on Daniel, pp. 164-166) declares that these periods, based on the Maccabean records, "vacillate between periods covering from three to six years, without being able, in any case, to demonstrate an aera of exactly three and a half years." So he comes to the conclusion that the  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years are to be taken "as a somewhat round number." And he, too, adds (p. 184) that there is "no exact correspondence" with the 2300 or 1150 days—hence they must be regarded as symbolic.

And Dr. H. C. Leupold (*Exposition of Daniel*, p. 355) pointedly remarks: "Reckon as you will, there will be no clear-cut period of either the one or the other length. Then the juggling of facts and figures begins."

He adds: "There is something basically wrong with such computations."—Page 356.

†Zöckler, with the thesis he holds, is forced to admit: "It must remain an open question whether ordinary calendar years are intended, or, what is scarcely less probable in itself, whether mystical periods are referred to, which are measured by a standard not known to men, but only to God."—*Lange's Commentary*, on Daniel, p. 161.

violates the fundamental law of symbolism—which is that all symbols stand for something other than the object or item used as the symbol. Thus the “beasts” of Daniel 7 and 8 symbolize *not* literal beasts but specified nations. Similarly, the attendant time features must stand for some time measurement other than the actual unit used in the prophetic portrayal. Thus in symbolic time prophecy a prophetic day stands for an actual year in literal fulfillment. (See Num. 14:34 and Eze. 4:6.) Therefore the 2300 days could not stand for the same number of literal days, but for that number of years. Consequently, anyone who insists that Antiochus is symbolized by the little horn violates the basic principle of symbolism, by literalizing the inseparable time factor. (See Questions 25 and 26.)

7. ADVENTIST POSITION ON THE FOUR EMPIRES OF DANIEL 2 AND 7.—Seventh-day Adventists hold the Roman view of Daniel’s fourth empire and reject the Greek view. The Babylonian Empire of Daniel’s day was overthrown by the Medo-Persian Empire, not simply by the Medes or the Persians alone (Dan. 7:5, 17; 8:20). And the Medo-Persian kingdom was, in turn, superseded by “Grecia” (Dan. 8:21). Therefore, the empire of Alexander, who conquered Persia, was the *third*, not the fourth of the series. And the empire of Alexander and its fourfold divisions constituted one Grecian empire, as has been explained. Therefore the next world power, the one that took over the domain of Alexander’s Macedonian empire, namely Rome, must be the *fourth* in actual sequence. This is admitted by most present-day advocates of the Greek view, but they adduce that fact as evidence that the prophecy

was not written by Daniel, but by a later writer, of Maccabean times, who did not know his history! Seventh-day Adventists believe that Daniel's series of kingdoms was not incorrect. We therefore hold that since Rome was actually the fourth in historic sequence, it was the fourth in Daniel's series.

The little horn of Daniel 7 is, we believe, the Papacy—as the majority of pre-Reformation, Reformation, post-Reformation, and later historicist Bible scholars, including the early nineteenth-century pre-millennialists, have taught before us. This power rose at the time specified, that is, following the breakup of the Roman fourth empire; it rose in the situation specified, that is, among the divided kingdoms that took over the Roman territory; it was “diverse” from the rest, for it was a religio-political power, the like of which has never been seen before or since; its rise was connected with the subduing of certain Arian kingdoms; it became “more stout” than any of the others, for it fell heir to Roman centralized authority that eventually dominated the weak and strong kingdoms around it; it was characterized by the authority of a man—the pope—who spoke great things, claiming to stand for, and to speak for, the Most High on earth; it warred on the saints and prevailed against them in greater and more prolonged persecutions than pagan Rome had ever done; it thinks itself qualified to change times and laws of the Most High, putting its traditions and absolute authority ahead of the Bible; its history can be harmonized perfectly with a symbolic period of three and one-half prophetic or symbolic years—1260 year-days; it continues until the latter

days, when it is called to account for its great words and deeds against the truth and the people of God. Its character and history also tally with other prophetic symbols of a great apostate power, and the cumulative evidence is overwhelming that the successor and continuation of the fourth empire, Rome, is the religio-political power of the Papacy.\* To set forth the evidence, Biblical and historical, to show how it fills the specification of the prophecies in detail, would require another full section, and this is not the place to do so.

8. ADVENTIST VIEW ON THE PARALLEL PROPHECY OF DANIEL 8.—Seventh-day Adventists hold that the four prophecies of Daniel 2, 7, 8, 9, and 11 largely parallel one another. That is, the later ones go back and repeat, covering the same ground, but emphasizing varying aspects in the coverage of the centuries and the course of empires—just as the four Gospels bring out the different facets of the matchless life of Christ our Lord. But to get the full picture, each should be read and understood in the light of the others.

The sequence of the world empires of Daniel 2, 7, 8, and 11 must, in the very nature of the case, be the same—except that in chapters 8 and 11 Babylonia, the first empire, is omitted. Daniel 7 and 8 are consequently paralleling counterparts, covering the same ground, except for the later starting point of Daniel 8, which begins with “Media and Persia” (verse 20) and

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\*This prophetic interpretation does not justify the charge that its holders are anti-Catholic. We do not deny credit for any good that has been done by Catholics, or discount the sincerity of earnest individual Catholics because we find the system condemned in the Scripture. We respect the freedom of every Catholic to worship God as he thinks right; and we hold the freedom to point out what we see as error and to seek to persuade men to accept what we believe is truth, without prejudice or bigotry.

is followed by “Grecia” (verse 21), with its fourfold divisions (verse 22). These, in turn, were followed by the little horn that became exceeding great (verse 9), evidently the next great world power. That next empire was Rome, which stood up against the Prince of the host, the Prince of princes, took away the sacrifices, and cast down the sanctuary (verses 11, 12, 25). In its dual form—first imperial and then papal—Rome waxed exceeding great, persecuted the “holy people” (verse 24)—the saints—set up false sacrifice for the true, cast down the truth, practiced, and prospered. It will continue until the end, when it will be “broken without hand” (verse 25). The fulfillment of the specifications by both the pagan and the papal phase of Rome makes the *horn* of Daniel 8 parallel the fourth *beast* of Daniel 7 and its *little horn—the Roman Empire* with its ten horn-divisions, and its continuation in the Roman Papacy, the “diverse” kingdom that rose among Rome’s divisions, blasphemed God and His laws, persecuted the saints, and will be recompensed therefor in the judgment.

History bears testimony to the continuity of Rome with the Papacy:

Out of the ruins of political Rome, arose the great moral Empire in the “giant form” of the Roman Church.—A. C. FLICK, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church* (1909), p. 150.

Whatever Roman elements the barbarians and Arians left standing in the provinces . . . were . . . put under the protection of the Bishop of Rome, who was the chief person there after the Emperor’s disappearance. . . . *The Roman Church in this way privily pushed itself into the place of the Roman World-Empire, of which it is the actual continuation; the empire has not perished, but has only undergone a transformation. If we assert . . . that the Roman Church is the old Roman Empire consecrated by*

the Gospel, that is no mere "clever remark," but the recognition of the true state of the matter historically, and the most appropriate and fruitful way of describing the character of this Church. It still governs the nations. . . . It is a political creation, and as imposing as a World-Empire, because the continuation of the Roman Empire. The Pope, who calls himself "King" and "Pontifex Maximus," is Caesar's successor.—ADOLF HARNACK, *What Is Christianity?* (1903), pp. 269, 270.

Thus the "little horn" of Daniel 7 is, we believe, the Papacy; but the "exceeding great" horn of Daniel 8, we understand, embraces *both pagan and papal Rome*, existing in both B.C. and A.D. periods. The only power that follows "Grecia" and lasts until it is "broken without hand" is Rome in its pagan and papal phases.

### The Basis of Our Rejection

To summarize, we reject the Antiochus Epiphanes interpretation because:

1. It does not fit the specifications of the prophecy.
2. It was propagated as a pagan's attempt to disprove prophecy, and thereby discredit the Christian religion, by showing that the book of Daniel was written after the events it was supposed to predict.
3. The finger of prophecy points rather to the great Roman apostasy, the Papacy, as the great vice-Christ—the Antichrist—who casts down the truth and wears out the saints of the Most High, and continues to the time of the end.

We therefore reject Antiochus as an inadequate fulfillment of Daniel 7 and 8, and accept the classic Protestant interpretation that offers an adequate fulfillment in history.



## **VII. Questions on Christ and His Ministry in the Sanctuary**



# A Wider Concept of the Atonement

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## QUESTION 29

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*Seventh-day Adventists have frequently been charged with teaching that the atonement was not completed on the cross. Is this charge true?*

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The answer to this question depends upon the definition given to the term "atonement." The word occurs in the New Testament only once (Rom. 5:11), where it is the translation of *katallagē*, a word meaning "reconciliation," or a "reconciling," and is elsewhere so translated (Rom. 11:15; 2 Cor. 5:18, 19). The related verb *katallassō* occurs six times, and in each case is translated "to reconcile" (Rom. 5:10; 1 Cor. 7:11; 2 Cor. 5:18-20). *Katallagē* should be rendered "reconciliation" in Romans 5:11 also.

The word "atonement" is much more frequent in the Old Testament. It occurs most frequently in the verbal expression "to make atonement" (Lev. 1:4; see Ex. 29:36), but occasionally also in the noun form "atonement" (Lev. 23:27; et cetera). The verb is the translation of an intensive form of the Hebrew *kaphar*, a word that basically means "to cover." The simple form is found in Genesis 6:14, and although translated "to pitch," really means "to cover." It is thus thought

that the basic meaning of "atonement" as the term is used in the Old Testament is to cover sin. From this come the derived meanings "to make amends," "to make matters right," "to expiate," "to make atonement."

In theological circles the term "atonement" has assumed a technical meaning and is generally used to describe the redeeming effect of Christ's incarnation, sufferings, and death. Christians are not all agreed as to what was accomplished by these events in the life of Christ, and consequently hold various theories of the atonement.

It is therefore necessary to make clear what aspect of the atonement is under consideration in any statement concerning the transaction.

Quite generally those who teach that a completed atonement was made on the cross view the term in its popular theological sense, but really what is meant by them is that on Calvary, the all-sufficient atoning sacrifice of Christ was offered for our salvation. With this concept all true Christians readily and heartily agree. "We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb. 10:10). Those who view this aspect of the work of Christ as a completed atonement, apply this term *only* to what Christ accomplished on the cross. They do not include in their definition the application of the benefits of the atonement made on the cross, to the individual sinner.

There are those however, who believe the atonement has a much wider connotation. They fully agree with those who stress a completed atonement on the cross in the sense of an all-sufficient, once-for-all, aton-

ing sacrifice for sin. They believe that nothing less than this took place on the cross of Calvary.

They believe, however, that in the ancient typical sanctuary service other aspects of the atonement are brought to light. In the morning and evening sacrifice they see sacrificial atonement *provided for all men* (Ex. 29:38-42). In the sinner's own personal offering they see sacrificial atonement *appropriated by the individual* (Lev. 4:31). Then came the grand climax on the Day of Atonement—day of judgment—when sin was definitely and finally dealt with. These ancient services, they believe, were all typical of the work of Christ. The morning and evening sacrifices and the individual offerings for sin pointed forward to the Saviour's sacrifice on Calvary's cross. The ministry of the priest in these services pointed forward to the high priestly ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary, where He applies the benefits of the atoning sacrifice to the individual sinner. Then the Day of Atonement services, they believe, pointed forward to the work to be accomplished in what they call the Investigative Judgment which eventually culminates in the final obliteration of iniquity at the close of the millennial period.

A study of certain Old Testament experiences, not connected with the sanctuary, will help to illustrate some of the meanings properly derived from the Hebrew word *kaphar*, which is rendered "atonement":

1. Notice the incident concerning Moses and Aaron and the making of the golden calf. This is recorded in Exodus 32. There we learn of the unfaithfulness of the people while Moses was in the mount with God.

Under direction of Aaron they made a golden calf, reminiscent of their stay for so many years in the land of Egypt. When Moses descended from the mount, he was greatly disturbed over the apostasy of the people, and it was in this crisis that the tribe of Levi stood by his side. Then he declared to Israel, "Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin" (Ex. 32:30).

Here is atonement, an atonement made evidently without a blood sacrifice, without any blood being sprinkled upon an altar. How was this accomplished? Moses did not bring a sacrificial offering to the Lord; no, he made an atonement in the fact that *he offered to take the place of the people*. In this he was a fitting figure of the Lord Jesus, the Saviour of mankind. In his earnest desire that the people might be saved, he was willing to be blotted out from God's book of life. "Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written" (verse 32).

2. Another instance is the case of David in his contact with the Gibeonites. The story is recorded in 2 Samuel 21. Saul had slain many of the Gibeonites, whom Israel had solemnly sworn to preserve. David, in seeking to make amends for the wrong done, called representatives of the Gibeonites together and said to them, "What shall I do for you? and wherewith *shall I make the atonement?*" (verse 3). Then follows the story of what was done. When seven of the sons of Saul were hanged, *the atonement was made*. Here atonement means *making adequate compensation for the*

*wrong that had been done.* This aspect is also embodied in the great sweep of Christ's atoning work. This is emphasized in the following words:

He [Christ] ascended to the heavenly courts, and from God Himself heard the assurance that *His atonement for the sins of men had been ample*, that through His blood all might gain eternal life. The Father ratified the covenant made with Christ, that He would receive repentant and obedient men, and would love them even as He loves His Son. Christ was to complete His work, and fulfill His pledge to "make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir."—ELLEN G. WHITE, *The Desire of Ages* (1940), p. 790. (Italics supplied.)

When upon the cross He cried out, "It is finished," He addressed the Father. The compact had been fully carried out. Now He declares: Father, it is finished. I have done Thy will, O My God. I have completed the work of redemption. If Thy justice is satisfied, "I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am." . . . The voice of God is heard proclaiming that justice is satisfied.—*Ibid.*, p. 834.

3. Still another incident recorded in Numbers 16 well illustrates a further aspect of the atonement. Israel had grievously provoked the Lord. The people had murmured against God; 250 of the princes, men of renown, had rebelled against the Most High. Resulting from this apostasy a plague broke out in the camp of Israel. In connection with this we have the divine declaration:

And Moses said unto Aaron, . . . Go quickly unto the congregation, and make an atonement for them (verse 46).

And Aaron took as Moses commanded, and ran into the midst of the congregation; and, behold, the plague was begun among the people: and he put on incense, and *made an atonement for the people*. And he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed (verses 47, 48).

Here we see Aaron as a mediator, a fitting type of

Christ Jesus, our blessed Lord. In thus stepping in between man and God, and by his sacrificial abnegation and devotion, *standing between the living and the dead*, covering the people from the wrath of God, *he thereby made an atonement for them*.

4. There is another aspect of the question, however, that should be considered. This grows out of the narrative recorded in Numbers 25. Israel had fallen captive to the seducing wiles of the heathen around them. They had sinned grievously in the sight of God in committing the abominations of the Canaanites. One man brought a heathen woman into the camp. God showed His displeasure by sending a plague among the people. Then Phinehas, the grandson of Aaron, realizing the gravity of the offense, went out in the name of God and slew the offenders. When this was done, the plague was stayed. Because of this man's jealousy for the work of God, the Lord said:

Behold, I give unto him my covenant of peace: and he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, *and made an atonement* for the children of Israel (verses 12, 13).

In this instance we see that this loyal priest *made an atonement by removing the incorrigible offenders*. The people of Israel were taught this aspect of God's plan in the sanctuary service as the Day of Atonement came around each year. The final act on that great day was the removal of the goat for Azazel, representing the instigator of evil. This goat was taken from the camp of Israel and banished forever. So it will be in the closing work of God. Then the last act in God's great plan of cleansing the universe from sin will be to re-

move the greatest offender of all, he who was a liar from the beginning, that old enemy, the devil and Satan.

These four experiences teach us vital and important lessons concerning the work of the atonement. In God's eternal purpose, He who makes the atonement is the Mediator. Everything in the typical service—the sacrifices and the work of the priesthood—pointed forward to Christ Jesus, our Lord. He took our place and died in our stead. In doing this, He became our substitute. In dying on the cross, in yielding His life an atonement for sin, He made adequate compensation for the wrong done; He met in full the penalty of the broken law of God.

Christ's sacrifice in behalf of man was full and complete. The condition of the atonement had been fulfilled. The work for which He had come to this world had been accomplished.—ELLEN G. WHITE, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 29.

But the work accomplished on Calvary involves also the application of the atoning sacrifice of Christ to the seeking soul. This is provided for in the priestly ministry of our blessed Lord, our great High Priest in the sanctuary above.

Not only are His people cleansed from sin by the sacrifice of the Son of God and saved for time and eternity, but the entire universe is to be purified from the very taint of iniquity with the author of sin utterly destroyed. Then will follow a new heaven and a new earth (2 Peter 3:13) which will be the eternal home of the ransomed of all ages, those who have been redeemed by the precious blood of the Lamb.

Some of our earlier Seventh-day Adventist writers, believing that the word "atonement" had a wider

meaning than many of their fellow Christians attached to it, expressed themselves as indicating that the atonement was not made on the cross of Calvary, but was made rather by Christ after He entered upon His priestly ministry in heaven. They believed fully in the efficacy of the sacrifice of Christ for the salvation of men, and they believed most assuredly that this sacrifice was made once for all and forever, but they preferred not to use the word "atonement" as relating *only* to the sacrificial work of Christ at Calvary. We repeat, they believed as fully as we do that the sacrificial work of our blessed Lord on Golgotha's hill was full and complete, never again to be offered, and that it was done once and for all. Their concept was that the sacrifice of Jesus *provided* the means of the atonement, and that the atonement itself was made only when the priests *ministered* the sacrificial offering on behalf of the sinner. Viewed in this light, it will be seen that the question after all is a matter of definition of terms. Today, not meeting the same issues that our earlier writers had to meet, we believe that the sacrificial atonement was made on the cross and was *provided* for all men, but that in the heavenly priestly ministry of Christ our Lord, this sacrificial atonement is *applied* to the seeking soul.

Stressing this wider concept, however, in no way detracts from the full efficacy of the death of the Son of God, once for all for the sins of men. It is unfortunate that a lack of definition of terms so often leads to misunderstanding on the greatest theme of the Christian message.

## Sacrificial Atonement Provided;

## Sacrificial Atonement Applied

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### QUESTION 30

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*Seventh-day Adventists are frequently charged with minimizing the atoning sacrifice completed on the cross, reducing it to an incomplete or partial atonement that must be supplemented by Christ's priestly ministry; perhaps it might be called a dual atonement. Is this charge true? Does not Mrs. White state that Christ is now making atonement for us in the heavenly sanctuary? Please explain your position, and state wherein you differ from others on the atonement.*

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May we at the outset state most earnestly and explicitly that Seventh-day Adventists do *not* believe that Christ made but a partial or incomplete sacrificial atonement on the cross. The word "atonement," in the Scripture, has a wide connotation. While it involves basically the atoning sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ on the cross, it also embraces other important aspects of the work of saving grace.

The word "atonement" itself is like some other words used in the Bible, such as "salvation" and "redemption." Salvation involves something that is *past*, so that one can say, "I *have been* saved." It also refers to an experience *in progress*, so that he can say, "I *am*

*being saved*" (see Acts 2:47, R.S.V.). It also refers to the future; for there is a sense in which he can also say, "*I shall be saved.*"

Much the same is true concerning the word "redemption." While the purchase price—the ransom—was paid at Calvary, and because of this we can say, "*I have been* redeemed," yet there are also certain aspects of redemption that are yet future. In Scripture we read of "the redemption of our body" (Rom. 8:23), and our Saviour, referring to His second advent, bade His followers "look up . . . for your redemption draweth nigh" (Luke 21:28).

The same principle obtains with reference to the word "atonement." Most decidedly the all-sufficient atoning sacrifice of Jesus our Lord was *offered and completed* on the cross of Calvary. This was done for all mankind, for "*he is the propitiation . . . for the sins of the whole world*" (1 John 2:2).

But this sacrificial work will actually benefit human hearts *only* as we surrender our lives to God and experience the miracle of the new birth. In this experience Jesus, our High Priest, *applies to us the benefits* of His atoning sacrifice. Our sins are forgiven, we become the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, and the peace of God dwells in our hearts.

In the tabernacle days of old, when the mysteries of redemption were foreshadowed by many typical sacrifices and ordinances, the priest, *after* the death of the sacrificial victim, would place the blood on the horns of the altar. And the record states that in this act "*the priest shall make an atonement for him [the sinner] as concerning his sin, and it shall be forgiven him*"

(Lev. 4:26). Here the atoning sacrifice *provided* is followed by the benefits of the same atoning sacrifice *applied*. In Old Testament days both were recognized as aspects of the one great over-all work of atonement. The one aspect provided the atoning sacrifice; the other, the application of its benefits.

Hence, the divine plan of redemption involves more than the vicarious atoning death of Christ though this is its very core; it also includes the ministry of our Lord as our heavenly High Priest. Having completed His sacrifice, He rose from the dead "for our justification" (Rom. 4:25) and then entered into the sanctuary above, there to perform His priestly service for needy man. "Having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Heb. 9:12) on the cross, He now *ministers the benefits* of that atonement for those who accept of His mighty provision of grace. Thus the atoning sacrifice, having been completed on Calvary, must now be applied and appropriated to those who are heirs of salvation. Our Lord's *ministry* is thus involved in the great work of atonement. So as we think of the mighty sweep of the atonement, in its provisions and its efficacy, it is seen to be vastly more comprehensive than many have thought.

We should remember that men are not automatically, involuntarily, impersonally, or universally saved en masse. They must individually accept of grace, and it is our understanding that while Christ died *provisionally and potentially* for all men, and nothing more can be added, yet His death is *actually and ultimately efficacious* for those *only* who individually accept and avail themselves of its benefits.

In order to be saved, there must be individual repentance and turning to God. The sinner must lay hold of the provisions of the fully completed atoning sacrifice made by Christ on Calvary. And *application* of the atoning provision of the cross, to repentant sinners and supplicating saints, becomes effective only through Christ's priestly ministry—and this whether a man fully understands it theologically or not.

It is this latter provision of priestly ministry that accomplishes the actual, experiential, and continuous heart cleansing in the individual, not only from the guilt but also from the pollution and power of sin. It is this that makes it efficacious to men. Christ's heavenly ministry in our behalf brings about the realization of peace and the joy of redemption through the gift of the Holy Spirit, which our ministering High Priest sends forth into our hearts. The atonement therefore involves not only the transcendent act of the cross, but also the benefits of Christ's sacrifice which are continually being applied to needy man. And this will continue on to the close of human probation.

For extracts concerning the atonement, see Appendix 661.

### I. The Vast Sweep of the Atonement

In common with conservative Christians, Adventists teach an atonement that necessitated the incarnation of the eternal Word—the Son of God—in order that He might become the Son of man; and living His life among men as our kinsman in the flesh, might die in our stead to redeem us. We believe that the atonement provides an all-sufficient, perfect, substitutionary

sacrifice for sin, which completely satisfies the justice of God and fulfills every requirement, so that mercy, grace, and forgiveness can be freely extended to the repentant sinner, without compromising the holiness of God or jeopardizing the equity of His rule. "To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26).

In this way God completely justifies the repentant sinner, however vile, and imputes the perfect righteousness of Christ to cover his unrighteousness; and then imparts, through sanctification, His own righteousness to the sinner, so that he is transformed into the very likeness of Christ.

And the wondrous ultimate of it all will come through the glorification of our bodies at the second advent of our Lord, which will bring full and final deliverance from the very presence of sin forevermore. Christ, then, is in Himself the sacrificial offering, the ministering priest, and the coming king. That covers past, present, and future. And this, we believe, will eventuate in the final eradication from the universe forever of all sin and its effects as well as its malign originator. This, we understand, is the ultimate effect of the atonement made on Calvary.

## II. Atoning Sacrifice and Ministering Priest

We feel it to be most important that Christians sense the difference between the atoning act of Christ on the cross as a forever completed sacrifice, and His work in the sanctuary as officiating high priest, *ministering the benefits* of that sacrifice. What He did on

the cross was for *all men* (1 John 2:2). What He does in the sanctuary is for those only who *accept* His great salvation.

Both aspects are integral and inseparable phases of God's infinite work of redemption. The one provides the sacrificial offering; the other provides the application of the sacrifice to the repentant soul. The one was made by Christ as victim; the other, by Christ as priest. Both are aspects of God's great redemptive plan for man.

That Seventh-day Adventists are not alone in this concept is evident from the following extracts from a recent book:

The Atonement is the work of God in Christ for man's salvation and renewal.—VINCENT TAYLOR, *The Cross of Christ* (Macmillan, 1956), p. 87.

In its nature and scope, the Atonement is both deliverance and attainment. It concerns man's sin and his blessedness; and it cannot be the one without being at the same time the other.—*Ibid.*, pp. 87, 88.

It is important at the outset to distinguish two aspects of the doctrine which can be separated in thought, but not without grave loss in practice. These are . . . (a) the saving deed of Christ, and (b) the appropriation of His work by faith, both individual and communal. These two *together* constitute the Atonement.—*Ibid.*, p. 88.

In consequence, atonement is both accomplished *for us* and wrought *in us*.—*Ibid.*, p. 89.

Perhaps our greatest need to-day, if we would rise above the poverty of much of our worship, is to experience once more the wonder and reliance upon Christ's ceaseless saving ministry, which is the true centre of Christian devotion and the abiding source of Christian living.—*Ibid.*, p. 104.

When, therefore, one hears an Adventist say, or reads in Adventist literature—even in the writings of Ellen G. White—that Christ is making atonement now,

it should be understood that we mean simply that Christ is now *making application of the benefits of the sacrificial atonement He made on the cross*; that He is making it efficacious for us individually, according to our needs and requests. Mrs. White herself, as far back as 1857, clearly explained what she means when she writes of Christ's making atonement for us in His ministry:

The great Sacrifice had been offered and had been accepted, and the Holy Spirit which descended on the day of Pentecost carried the minds of the disciples from the earthly sanctuary to the heavenly, where Jesus had entered by His own blood, to shed upon His disciples the *benefits* of His atonement.—*Early Writings*, p. 260. (Italics supplied.)

# Salvation Prefigured in the Sanctuary Service

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## QUESTION 31

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*Does your teaching of the sanctuary service mean that the work of Christ on Calvary was not an all-sufficient, complete, once-for-all sacrifice—a sacrifice that obtained for us eternal redemption? Or was something subsequently necessary to make the sacrificial work of Christ effective for the salvation of man?*

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To the first part of the question our answer is an unequivocal No. The death of Christ on Calvary's cross provides the only sacrifice by which man can be saved. We believe, however, that the sanctuary and the Temple services of long ago emphasized certain vital truths in connection with the atoning work of Jesus our Lord.

In the sanctuary ritual during the days of Israel's wanderings in the wilderness, and later in the time of the Temple, many sacrifices were offered. But whatever their number, and whatever their variety, every sacrifice without exception pointed forward to the *one great sacrifice*—to the death of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour; He was the antitype of all these sacrificial offerings.

This “one sacrifice” (Heb. 10:12), or “one offering” (verse 14), of Christ was “for ever” (verse 12),

and wrought "eternal redemption" (Heb. 9:12) for man. This sacrifice was completely efficacious. It provided complete atonement for all mankind, and will never be repeated, for it was all-sufficient and covered the needs of every soul.

These sacrificial offerings teach certain important lessons; they constitute a wonderful revelation of God's redeeming grace, repeatedly emphasized to ancient Israel. The book of Hebrews mentions that the many sacrifices offered in the days of Israel were divided into "daily" offerings (Heb. 7:27; 10:11) and *yearly* sacrifices (Heb. 9:7; 10:3). The sacrifices were offered *every day* as well as on the yearly Day of Atonement. An analysis of these sacrifices will reveal God's plan of salvation as made known to His people of old.

As in the New Testament it took four gospel writers to portray the life of Christ on earth, so in the Old Testament it took various sacrifices, or phases of the sacrificial work, to represent the all-inclusive work of Jesus as the great antitypical sacrifice for the redemption of a lost race.

1. THE MORNING AND EVENING SACRIFICES.—The morning and evening sacrifices were offered every morning and every evening, every day of the year, irrespective of the day—even on the Feast of the Passover, Pentecost, the Day of Atonement, or any other special festival. These offerings were consequently called the "continual" sacrifices (Ex. 29:38, 42) and prefigured in a unique sense the sacrifice of Christ our Lord as *always available and ever efficacious* (Heb. 7:3, 24; 10:12). It is to be particularly observed that this offering was not provided by any individual. It

was offered for the people as a whole. It was not the sinner's offering *to* God; it was, on the contrary, the Lord's offering *for* His people. It was offered irrespective of whether the individual Israelite took advantage of its provision or not.

As to the vital significance of the morning and evening sacrifices, let us observe the remarks of three authors, one Jewish and two Christian.

The daily continual (Heb. *tamid*) offering was in later times called "the Tamid." Offered throughout the year, it was "the centre and core of public worship in Judaism" (Kennedy).—J. H. Hertz, *The Pentateuch and Haftorahs*, on Num. 28:2-8, p. 694.

The daily offering prescribed at Exodus xxix:38-42, and which had presumably never been intermittent since, is specified again here because it formed the foundation of the whole sacrificial system. Whatever else was offered was in addition to it, not in lieu of it.—R. WINTERBOTTOM, in *The Pulpit Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 380.

The whole system rested upon the daily sacrifice, which was never omitted, to which all other sacrifices were superadded. Not even the triumph of the passover or the affliction of the day of atonement affected the daily sacrifice.—*Ibid.*, p. 383.

The institution [of the morning and evening sacrifice] was so imperative, that in no circumstances was this daily oblation to be dispensed with; and the due observance of it would secure the oft-promised grace and blessing of their heavenly King.—JAMESON, FAUSSET and BROWN, *Commentary, Critical and Expository*, on Ex. 29:38.

This taught Israel vital lessons of truth—of "their constant dependence upon the atoning blood of Christ"; that "faith laid hold upon the merits of the promised Saviour prefigured by the atoning sacrifice."—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, pp. 352, 353.

In a special sense the morning and evening sacrifices prefigured the sacrifice of Christ for all men. These pro-

vided in type, for Israel of old, just what the antitypical sacrifice of Christ provided later for the actual forgiveness of sin and the salvation of all who yielded themselves to God. They represented the sacrifice of Jesus Christ when He tasted death "for every man" (Heb. 2:9) and became "the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2:2). The morning and evening sacrificial offerings brought home to the hearts and minds of the people God's provision for their salvation—the way of deliverance from sin. It revealed the way to liberty from the bondage of iniquity. Wherever the Israelites lived they could turn toward Jerusalem at the time of the morning and evening sacrifices, confess their sins, and know that their God would graciously forgive (1 Kings 8:29, 30, 46-50).

2. THE SINNER'S DAILY SACRIFICES.—There were certain offerings that the individual sinner and the congregation were instructed to bring—burnt offerings, peace offerings, meal offerings, sin offerings, and trespass offerings. These might be called the *sinner's responsive offerings*. This did not, of course, mean that every individual in Israel brought his offering every day to the sanctuary. In the time of the Temple, these offerings could be presented only at Jerusalem (Deut. 12:5, 6, 13, 14, 26). And as most of the people lived far away, it was impossible for them to make their offerings at Jerusalem every day. They could, however, comply with the directions of the Lord when they came to the Holy City three times a year. But by means of the daily morning and evening sacrifices, they could know their sins were forgiven each day. They could in

this way avail themselves of God's gracious provision, though they lived on the frontiers of the Holy Land, or even in a foreign clime.

These personal sacrifices are referred to in the early chapters of Leviticus. Some were to be offered for the entire congregation, others for the priests and leaders of the people, still others for the individual, or, as stated in the text, for the "common people" (Lev. 4:27).

It is to be borne in mind that these individually and congregationally provided offerings differed markedly from the morning and evening sacrifices. With the provision of the morning and evening sacrifices the individual sinner had absolutely nothing to do. *They were offered on his behalf, whether he sought their benefits or not.* But the individually provided offerings were different. The sinner himself provided them; he brought his own offering to the tabernacle. Recognizing it as his substitute, he placed his hands upon its head, and confessed his sins over it. Then the sacrifice was slain.

To us today, this procedure may have the appearance of human works, for every act thus far mentioned was performed by the person presenting the sacrifice. But this provision also was in the plan of God. These works on the part of the offerer were not as a *means of salvation*, but were an *evidence of faith*. These individual offerings, therefore, were not *primary*; they were *secondary*. In other words, the morning and evening sacrifice was fundamental; it was first and foremost. In a special sense this was the type of what was accomplished on Calvary's cross in antitype for all mankind.

The individual who accepted the benefits provided by the morning and evening sacrifice was given opportunity to express his faith and to reveal his acceptance of the divine provision for his salvation. This he did at the command of God. When visiting Jerusalem he brought *his own offering* for himself and for his family. In the morning and evening sacrifice we see *provided atonement*; in the individual sacrifice we see *appropriated atonement*.

These two groups of sacrificial offerings—the one *representing God's provision for man*, the other *representing man's acceptance of these provisions*—were offered every day of the year. These, in a specific way, were the offerings for sin. These were the vital sacrifices that meant deliverance for the longing soul. They were God's provision for the one seeking pardon, victory, and peace with God.

This experience on the part of the individual is what we commonly call conversion, or in New Testament language, being "born again," or passing from death unto life. In this surrender of heart and life, not only does the individual know pardon for sin, but he has peace with God and experiences the joy of the Lord in his soul.

**3. THE DAY OF ATONEMENT RITUAL.**—Several sacrifices were offered on the Day of Atonement. This day was the climactic day of the ceremonial year, bringing to a consummation all the sacrifices that had been offered daily throughout the year. On that day there were sacrifices that the earthly high priest offered for himself and his family (Lev. 16:3, 6, et cetera). These were for his own personal preparation for the solemn

services of the Day of Atonement. Before he could take part in God's work, he himself must be purified, sanctified for his high, holy, and responsible office and work.

Another part of the service was the bringing of two goats, concerning which we read: "Then he [the high priest] shall take the two goats, and set them before the Lord at the door of the tent of meeting; and Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats, one lot for the Lord and the other lot for Azazel" (Lev. 16:7, 8, R.S.V.).

Now let us look at the entire round of sacrificial ritual on this great day. The sacrifices for sin can be listed as follows:

- a. The regular morning sacrifice (Ex. 29:38, 39; Num. 28:4).
- b. The special sacrifices for the high priest and his house—a bullock for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering (Lev. 16:3, 6).
- c. The specified goat for the people (verse 15).
- d. The regular evening sacrifice (Ex. 29:38, 39; Num. 28:4).

**4. THE LAST ACT IN GOD'S GREAT WORK FOR MAN.**—The work of this special day was a type, or illustration, of the last aspect of the great work of God for man. In ancient Israel, *it was a day of judgment*. This is seen in the instruction given:

Whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people. And whatsoever soul it be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people (Lev. 23:29, 30).

Still further, the Jewish people through the centuries

have so regarded the Day of Atonement. Note the following:

Even the angels, we are told in the Ritual, are seized with fear and trembling; they hurry to and fro and say, "Behold the Day of Judgment has come." The Day of Atonement is the Day of Judgment.—PAUL ISAAC HERSHON, *Treasures of the Talmud* (1882), p. 97.

God, seated on His throne to judge the world, at the same time Judge, Pleader, Expert, and Witness, openeth the Book of Records. . . . The great trumpet is sounded; a still, small voice is heard, . . . saying, This is the day of judgment. . . . On New Year's Day the decree is written; on the Day of Atonement it is sealed who shall live and who are to die.—*The Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 2, p. 286.

5. THE GOAT FOR THE SIN OFFERING.—The goat for the sin offering on the Day of Atonement was a unique sacrificial offering. There was nothing like it in the whole round of sacrifices. It differed from all the other offerings in that it had a dual significance. In the first place, it provided atonement for the people—"to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins" (Lev. 16:34). In the second place, it was used by the Lord in cleansing the very sanctuary that was the center of their worship throughout the year (verses 16, 20).

Observe how complete the cleansing work of the atoning blood was represented to be. The precious blood provided cleansing—(a) for the high priest and his house; (b) for all the people; (c) for the sanctuary, its altar, et cetera.

6. THE GRAND CLIMAX.—Now comes the climactic act of this great day. After *full and complete atonement*\*

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\*Several authorities recognize that before Azazel came into the picture on the Day of Atonement, *full and complete atonement had been made for the people*. We give quotations from but two writers—one Christian, one Jewish:

*has been provided for the people, and they are safe and secure from the wiles of the great deceiver,* God gives His people a preview of the way in which He is going to banish iniquity from His great universe. Here, in type, the author of sin is taken and is judged. He who introduced iniquity into the government of God receives his just deserts. The responsibility for conceiving, for introducing, and for inducing men and women to rebellion against God is rolled back upon his head. As the goat is consigned to the wilderness of death, so, near the end of all things, God will consign Satan to the "bottomless pit" (Rev. 20:1), and later to the lake of fire, where he goes down in utter and irrevocable destruction. (See also Question 35.)

These, we believe, are some of the lessons of the great Day of Atonement in the long ago.

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"The slain goat had symbolized and ceremonially wrought full atonement or covering of sins."—*Pulpit Commentary, on Leviticus*, p. 242.

"One [the Lord's goat] was a victim intended to atone for sins."—M. M. KALISCH, *The Old Testament, Leviticus*, vol. 2, p. 327.

"The atonement of the people . . . was effected solely by the blood of the . . . goat killed as a sin-offering."—*Ibid.*, pp. 293, 294.

# The Heavenly Sanctuary—

## Figurative or Literal Concepts

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### QUESTION 32

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*Relevant to the doctrine of the atonement,  
do Seventh-day Adventists believe that the sanc-  
tuary in heaven is literal, or figurative?*

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Before attempting to answer this question, it seems that there should be some understanding as to the meaning of the words "literal" and "figurative." If by the word "literal" it is thought that we conceive of a heavenly sanctuary made of brick and mortar, with all that we associate with such literalness in our everyday life, the answer is, We do not. If, on the other hand, in the use of the word "figurative" the thought conveyed is that of something unreal, mythical, imaginary, or visionary, the answer would again be, We do not conceive of the sanctuary in this sense.

We believe the following statements from Holy Writ: "We have such an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the *sanctuary*, and of the *true tabernacle*, which the Lord pitched, and not man" (Heb. 8:1, 2).

We understand from these scriptures that as the throne of God is real, and Jesus who sits there is real, the sanctuary or tabernacle in heaven would be just as real. As to its form, we know only what is revealed in

the Scriptures. We know nothing of what entered into its construction. This does not seem to be revealed, and we just let it rest there, without seeking to probe further into the question.

There are two considerations that should be of help in understanding this question. One is the fact that the tabernacle in the wilderness was built "according to the pattern." This is stressed in several places in the Bible. Moses was counseled by the Lord to make all things "after the pattern" (Ex. 25:9). He was reminded also that this "pattern" had been shown to him while he was in the mount with God: "And thou shalt rear up the tabernacle according to the fashion thereof which was shewed thee in the mount" (Ex. 26:30).

Moses himself did not plan this building. The instruction came directly from God. Moses was counseled to make the tabernacle "according to the fashion that he had seen" (Acts 7:44). The Greek word for "fashion" is *tupos*, and this is rendered variously by such words as "pattern," "form," "figure," et cetera. Some translators, such as Weymouth, render the thought "in imitation of the *model* which he had seen." In rendering Hebrews 9:24, Weymouth mentions that the earthly was "a mere *copy* of the reality." This "reality" was "the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man" (Heb. 8:2). The reality of the sanctuary in the heavens is certainly much more than implied.

One can hardly read such expressions as the above without coming to the conclusion that the sanctuary in the heavens, where Christ our great High Priest is, is just as real as He Himself is real. The language used, it seems to us, very definitely conveys that meaning.

Furthermore, the description by the prophet John in the Apocalypse is clear on this point. He is writing in language his hearers could quite well understand, for they were acquainted with the tabernacle ritual and all that was involved in its ministration on earth. He mentions the seven-branched candlestick, the "seven lamps of fire" (Rev. 4:5); the "golden altar" and the "golden censer" (Rev. 8:3); the "tabernacle of the testimony in heaven" (Rev. 15:5); and even "the ark of his testament" (Rev. 11:19).

Hence, not only is the temple or sanctuary or tabernacle mentioned, but also that which was evidently necessary in its service of ministration—the candlestick, the golden altar, the censer, and the ark of His testament. Therefore, we believe there is a real sanctuary in heaven, where our blessed Lord ministers on our behalf.

And of still further consideration is the use of the word "shadow" in connection with the tabernacle, and later with the Temple, which figured so largely in the ceremonial services of Israel of old. The word "shadow" as used in the New Testament is found in Hebrews 8:5; 10:1. It is from the Greek *skia*, and in referring to this word, W. E. Vine, in *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, remarks:

The image or outline cast by an object, Col. 2:17, of ceremonies under the Law; of the Tabernacle and its appurtenances and offerings, Heb. 8:5; of these as appointed under the Law, Heb. 10:1.

Geerhardus Vos, late Professor of Biblical Theology in Princeton Theological Seminary, in his book, *The Teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Eerdmans, 1956), comments on the word "shadow":

In [Heb.] 8:5 we are told that the Jewish priests serve that which is a copy and a shadow (*hupodeigma* and *skia*). The author adds that it is a copy and shadow of the *heavenly things*. Thus it is not a shadow projected or thrown forward (into the future), but a shadow cast down from heaven to earth. Moreover, the particular use made by the author of the adjective *true* (*alēthinos*) ought to be noted. *Alēthinos* is a much stronger word than *alēthēs* which is the more common word for *true*. *Alēthinos* means not simply *the true*, but *the real*, *the genuine*, *the veritable*.—Page 58.

Hence we may regard the earthly tabernacle as but the shadow of the reality; the real sanctuary was in heaven, but it cast its shadow on the earth. The earthly could be seen by men, but not the heavenly. We do, however, in this word “shadow” catch glimpses of what the heavenly sanctuary is like by looking at its shadow on the earth. It is in this sense that we believe there is a real sanctuary in heaven.

Certain aspects of this question are made plain for us in the Word of God: (1) Jesus is our great High Priest (Heb. 4:14); (2) Christ is “a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec” (Heb. 5:6); (3) Jesus is a “minister of the sanctuary” (Heb. 8:2); (4) Jesus is our High Priest, who bids us “come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:16); (5) because He is an all-sufficient Saviour, He has an unchangeable priesthood, and “he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Heb. 7:25); and (6) as our High Priest, it was necessary that He should “have somewhat also to offer” (Heb. 8:3).

# The High-Priestly Ministry of Christ

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## QUESTION 33

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*Since Adventists hold that complete sacrificial atonement was made on the cross, what do you teach concerning the ministry of our Lord as High Priest in heaven? When did Christ assume His responsibilities as priest? What do you understand by the expression "he ever liveth to make intercession"? How can Christ officiate as priest in a sanctuary, and at the same time occupy His Father's throne?*

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The priesthood of Christ is a cardinal doctrine in New Testament teaching. The atoning death of Christ, and His all-sufficient sacrifice for man's redemption, is for us, as for all evangelical Christians, the central truth of Christianity. Yet without our Lord's resurrection and ascension, the provisions of His atoning sacrifice would not be available to man (1 Cor. 15:17).

The victory of our Lord at Calvary was decisive and eternal. Not only did He conquer sin, but He conquered death. And these tremendous truths became the focal point of the apostolic ministry. "With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all" (Acts 4:33).

Having burst the bands of death, Jesus ascended as the “King of glory” (Psalm 24), to appear in the presence of God for us. And there, amid the adoration of angels, He was enthroned. Addressing Him as the Creator, as the One who had “laid the foundation of the earth” (Heb. 1:10), the omnipotent Father reaffirms His position as God, saying: “Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows” (Heb. 1:8, 9).

His consecration as High Priest coincided with His enthronement. And there, at the throne of the Majesty on high, immediately after His ascension He entered upon His priestly ministry in the “greater and more perfect tabernacle” (Heb. 9:11) then “to appear in the presence of God for us” (verse 24). To Him was given all power and authority both in heaven and on earth.

### **I. Christ's Priesthood Vital Theme for Study**

The high-priestly ministry of our Lord occupies a prominent place in Adventist theology. In fact, we believe that much study should be given to Christ's ministry in the sanctuary above, and especially to the concluding phase of that ministry, which we understand to be a work of judgment. And to understand the judgment, we must of necessity understand what is involved in His priestly ministry.

On the day of Pentecost the apostle Peter declared that Jesus, having been raised up from the dead, is now

"by the right hand of God exalted," and has thus been made "both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:33, 36). This concept became the keystone in the arch of the apostolic message.

While the apostles referred many times in their sermons and epistles to our Lord's exaltation, yet the real nature of His work as High Priest is set forth in the Epistle to the Hebrews. The book is virtually an exposition of this great theme. By a series of propositions, covering chapters 1 to 10, the sacrifice of Christ, and His priestly ministry in heaven, are set forth in contrast with the earthly sacrifices and priesthood of Aaron. The purpose of these comparisons is to emphasize the reality and advantages of the new order. We here present a brief summary of these.

## II. Summary of Christ's Position as Our High Priest

CHAPTER 1 presents the Son of God as the Creator and Upholder of all things (verses 2, 10); as "the express image" of God and the appointed Heir of all things (verses 2, 3); as the One who by Himself purged our sins and then was seated at God's right hand (verse 3); as greater than all the angels (verse 4); as the begotten Son of God (verse 5); as God enthroned and anointed (verses 8, 9).

CHAPTER 2 touches upon the incarnation, showing Him as man, made lower than angels, and tasting death for every man (verses 6-9); as our Deliverer and the Captain of our salvation (verses 14-16); as being made like unto His brethren that He might become a merciful and faithful High Priest (verse 17), able to "succour them that are tempted" (verse 18).

CHAPTER 3 reveals Him as both Apostle and High Priest, greater than Moses, and faithful to His appointment (verses 1-3); and as the Builder of a spiritual house, whose house are we (verses 6, 14).

CHAPTER 4 designates Him our “great high priest” who is passed into the heavens (verse 14); as the Word of God; as our Judge, before whose eyes all things are naked and open (verses 12, 13); yet able to sympathize with the tempted and infirm because He had been in all points “tempted like as we are” (verse 15).

CHAPTER 5 introduces Him as a “priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec” (verses 6, 10), not after the Levitical order; as One compassed with infirmity and learning obedience through His suffering (verses 7, 8); then as the Author of eternal salvation (verse 9).

CHAPTER 6 declares that God, by an oath, confirmed His purpose in Christ (verses 16, 17); that Christ has entered within the veil; that He is our hope and the anchor of the soul (verse 19).

CHAPTER 7 contrasts the features of the Melchizedek and the Levitical priesthoods: Melchizedek called “King of righteousness” and “King of peace” (verse 2); Melchizedek being greater than Abraham, Christ’s priesthood is therefore greater than the Levitical (verses 4-7); emphasizes that Christ’s priesthood was not of the order of Aaron (that is, inherited from one’s parents), since Christ sprang from Judah and not Levi, but after the order of Melchizedek, who was appointed priest by God and did not receive it from his parents (verse 14); made not by a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life (verse 16); as our “surety” of redemption (verse 22), “holy, harmless, undefiled,

separate from sinners" (verse 26), He "ever liveth to make intercession" for us (verse 25).

CHAPTER 8 leads into the chief point of the epistle, i.e., Jesus as minister of the true tabernacle (verses 1, 2); as having "a more excellent ministry" than Aaron (verse 6); as establishing the new covenant upon "better promises" (verses 6-8); as writing His law on our hearts and minds (verse 10).

CHAPTER 9 contrasts the Mosaic with the heavenly sanctuary (verses 2-11). Christ our High Priest officiates in a greater and more perfect tabernacle (verse 11), as the One who has already obtained eternal redemption for us (verse 12), and as the spotless Sacrifice offered for lost man (verse 14). Heavenly things are not purified with the blood of beasts, but with "better sacrifices" (verse 23). In heaven Christ appeared in the presence of God for us (verse 24), concludes His work as High Priest (verse 26), and then returns to earth for His people (verses 27, 28).

CHAPTER 10 presents Christ as the complete fulfillment of the Levitical law of types and shadows (verses 1-9); earthly sacrifices could not take away sins (verses 4, 11); Christ was offered once for all (verses 10, 12); He becomes "a new and living way" (verse 20) through which we can enter into God's presence with holy boldness (verses 19, 21).

### III. Priesthood of Aaron and Christ Contrasted

In this epistle significant contrasts are made between the priesthood of Aaron and the priesthood of Christ.

Aaron was but a man.	Christ was "the Son of God."
Aaron and his successors were by nature sinners.	Christ was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners."
Aaron belonged to the tribe of Levi.	Christ was of Judah, the royal tribe.
Aaron was made priest "after the law of a carnal commandment."	Christ was made a priest by the word of an oath.
Aaron's service "made nothing perfect."	Christ "perfected for ever them that are sanctified."
Aaron officiated in the "copy" of heavenly things.	Christ officiates in the true tabernacle in heaven itself.
Aaron's tabernacle was made with hands.	Christ's tabernacle is not made with hands.
Aaron offered goats and calves.	Christ "offered up himself."
Aaron's priesthood was compassed with "infirmity."	Christ is priest "after the power of an endless life."
Aaron's priesthood was changed.	Christ "hath an unchangeable priesthood."
Aaron was the priest in a tabernacle on earth.	Christ serves in "heaven itself" appearing "in the presence of God for us."
Aaron could not "continue by reason of death."	Christ "ever liveth to make intercession."
Aaron offered earthly sacrifices "daily."	Christ offered Himself "once for all."
Aaron's sacrifice could not "take away sins."	Christ says, "Their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

The book of Hebrews climaxes with the claim that Jesus, having suffered on the cross that He might sanctify us, and then having been raised from the dead, is

now able, as the great Shepherd of the sheep, to make us perfect in every good work, accomplishing in us that which is well-pleasing in His sight (Heb. 13:10, 12, 20, 21).

#### IV. Christ—Man's Only Mediator

As the perfect High Priest, who has made a perfect propitiation for the sins of His people, Christ is now at God's right hand, applying to our lives the benefits of His perfect atoning sacrifice. As was well stated on page 355:

The great Sacrifice had been offered and had been accepted, and the Holy Spirit which descended on the day of Pentecost carried the minds of the disciples from the earthly sanctuary to the heavenly, where Jesus had entered by His own blood, to shed upon His disciples the benefits of His atonement.—*Early Writings*, p. 260.

He does this as our Mediator, for there is only "one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5). Through Him alone can we have access to God. He, as God, is Mediator from Deity downward to lost man; and as man, He is also Mediator from man upward to God. His priesthood constitutes the only channel of living relationship between God and man.

Only as a priest could He deal with sin; that is why He became a priest. As God, He could not officiate as priest, *for a priest must be taken from among his brethren*. Therefore "it behoved him to be made *like unto his brethren*, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest" (Heb. 2:17). Thus we read that "every high priest" is taken "from among men" (Heb. 5:1). His priesthood is therefore bound up with His

incarnation. We read also that He “through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God” (Heb. 9: 14). Not only did Christ offer Himself on the cross, but He was God’s gift before that, even from the “foundation of the world” (Eph. 1:4).

In the upper room, just before entering the Garden, He, as the Eternal Word, offered His high-priestly prayer to the Father. He who had shared with His Father the effulgent glory of the Eternal Godhead, presented His disciples to Him; and not them only, but all who, through their ministry, would be led to a knowledge of salvation. Commenting on this, Ellen G. White impressively portrays the scene:

“And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to Thee. Holy Father, keep through Thine own name those whom Thou hast given Me, that they may be one, as We are.” “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on Me through their word; that they all may be one; . . . that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved Me.”

Thus in the language of one who has divine authority, Christ gives His elect church into the Father’s arms. As a consecrated high priest He intercedes for His people. As a faithful shepherd He gathers His flock under the shadow of the Almighty, in the strong and sure refuge. For Him there waits the last battle with Satan, and He goes forth to meet it.—*The Desire of Ages* (1940), p. 680.

#### V. The Conflict in the Garden

From that place of communion He went forth to meet the devil in a life-and-death struggle. It is our belief that in the Garden of Gethsemane He really accepted our place, and became deeply conscious in a special sense of the burden of the world’s sin.

In that dark hour He cried, “My soul is exceeding

sorrowful, even unto death" (Matt. 26:38). In the Garden He prayed not for His disciples but for Himself. The Scripture says that He "offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death" (Heb. 5:7). These descriptive lines emphasize the reality of that crisis:

He felt that by sin He was being separated from His Father. The gulf was so broad, so black, so deep, that His spirit shuddered before it. This agony He must not exert His divine power to escape. As man He must suffer the consequences of man's sin. As man He must endure the wrath of God against transgression.

Christ was now standing in a different attitude from that in which He had ever stood before. His suffering can best be described in the words of the prophet, "Awake, O sword, against My shepherd, and against the man that is My fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts." Zech. 13:7. As the substitute and surety for sinful man, Christ was suffering under divine justice. He saw what justice meant.—*Ibid.*, p. 686.

## VI. Christ Both Priest and Sacrifice

Here in the Garden, and later on the cross, He was both offerer and offering; both priest and victim.

As in the typical service the high priest laid aside his pontifical robes, and officiated in the white linen dress of an ordinary priest; so Christ laid aside His royal robes, and garbed Himself with humanity, and offered sacrifice, Himself the priest, Himself the victim.—ELLEN G. WHITE, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 33.

The Levitical priests, in the typical service, were consecrated by the blood of bullocks (Leviticus 8), but Christ, in the perfection of His priesthood, was consecrated by His own blood (Heb. 9:12). He "offered up himself" is the scriptural statement, and as our priest He was "consecrated for evermore," and this "not without an oath" (Heb. 7:27, 28, 20).

His priesthood therefore includes His offering of Himself to God, for only a priest could offer sacrifices. And it was the shedding of His own blood that ratified the everlasting covenant, which God made for man in the beginning. The effects of that sacrifice, however, would never have become available to man had Christ not risen from the dead and taken His place at the Father's right hand. This the apostle Paul clearly states: "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." "If Christ be not raised, . . . ye are yet in your sins" (1 Cor. 15:14, 17).

When our Lord ascended into the heavens He appeared before the Father, in the presence of the angels, at which time He was installed as our High Priest. Like Melchizedek, He, too, is "King of righteousness" and "King of peace" (Heb. 7:2). Although the King of glory, He is also the King-Priest of the Melchizedek order, upon His Father's throne, the one Mediator between God and His people. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5). As the divine Son of God, He became a priest after the order of Melchisedec (Heb. 6:20), the unique feature of whose ministry is that it abideth "continually" (Heb. 7:3). So Christ "continueth ever" (verse 24). "He ever liveth" (verse 25).

### VII. Ancient Sanctuary Service an Object Lesson

While Adventists believe that the Mosaic tabernacle, or sanctuary, with its sacrificial services, as a type, was to meet its fulfillment in the perfect offering and priestly ministry of our Lord, yet we also recog-

nize that important lessons can be learned from the study of the tabernacle and its services. But while the types and shadows of the Levitical ritual do have a spiritual significance, it should not be expected that every detail in the sanctuary of old had a typical meaning.

For instance, the pins, the bolts, and the sockets that held the tabernacle together were matters of utility, having no special significance. It is better to see and study the great *realities* of the sacrifice and priestly ministry of Christ than to dwell too much upon the *details* of the typical service, which gave but an inadequate portrayal of the sacrifice and ministry of Christ. Far better to interpret the earthly tabernacle in the light of the heavenly, rather than to circumscribe the antitypical realities by the limitations of too close an application of the type.

The building, the ritual, and the sacrifices, taken together, were intended to show us the way to God. Those priests of old served "unto the example and shadow of heavenly things" (Heb. 8:5). And while only "a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things" (Heb. 10:1), yet they were a vivid object lesson of the reality, a prophetic institution of deep significance. For that reason a very detailed account of the building and its service was given. Much of Exodus, and all of Leviticus, contains that instruction; and the essence of this detail is seen in its antitypical significance in the Hebrew epistle.

Regrettably, there are Christians who seem to see little of value in the study of the ancient sanctuary and its services. Yet a deep significance attaches to these

symbols. While "the law made nothing perfect" (Heb. 7:19), and could "never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect" (Heb. 10:1), yet the fact that in the Scriptures such emphasis is given to the ancient sanctuary and its services reveals its importance, not only to the Israelites of old, but also to the Christians of today.

It was "not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (Heb. 10:4). But the sacrifice of our Lord on the cross does provide for the taking away of sin. "Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb. 9:26). "Christ was *once* offered to bear the sins of many" (verse 28). The expression "once," or "once for all," in connection with the sacrifice of Christ, is deeply significant. The Greek word is *hapax*: "Christ . . . hath *once* suffered for sins" (1 Peter 3:18); "Christ was *once* offered to bear the sins of many" (Heb. 9:28); and "now *once* in the end of the world" (verse 26).

In 1 Peter 3:18 and Hebrews 9:26, the R.S.V. translates *hapax* "once for all." This comes from *ephapax*, a strengthened form of *hapax*. And *ephapax*, in the following four texts, the E.R.V. and the R.S.V. is translated "once for all." He did this *once for all* when "he offered up himself" (Heb. 7:27); "He entered *once for all* into the holy place" (Heb. 9:12); "He died to sin, *once for all*" (Rom. 6:10); "offering of the body of Jesus Christ *once for all*" (Heb. 10:10). He did this not by "the blood of goats and calves," but by "his own blood" he entered *once for*

*all* into the holy place (or, holies),\* “thus securing an eternal redemption” for us (Heb. 9:12, R.S.V.).

### VIII. Redemption Absolute by the Victory of Christ

When He ascended to heaven, He “sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high” (Heb. 1:3; compare Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1). The significance of this is lost if we interpret it merely as a posture. It really expresses honor as represented by authority. Stephen pictured Him not sitting but “standing on the right hand of God” (Acts 7:56). While He is our High Priest ministering on our behalf, He is also co-executive with the Father in the government of the universe. How glorious is the thought that the King, who occupies the throne, is also our representative at the court of heaven! This becomes all the more meaningful when we realize that Jesus our surety entered the “holy places,” and appeared in the presence of God for us. But it was not with the *hope* of obtaining something for us at that time, or at some future time. No! *He had already obtained it for us on the cross.* And now as our High Priest He ministers the virtues of His atoning sacrifice to us. Dr. Thomas Charles Edwards has well remarked:

The sacrifice was made and completed on the Cross, as the victims were slain in the outer court. But it was through the blood of those victims the high-priest had authority to enter the holiest place; and when he had entered, he must sprinkle

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\*The Greek word here translated “holy place” is *hagia*, and is in the plural form. A correct translation would be “the holies,” or “holy places,” as in Hebrews 9:24. This entrance, Scripture teaches, occurred at His ascension to glory (Acts 1), having already finished His sacrificial work on the cross. The word translated “obtained,” in the Greek is from *heurisko*, and is rendered “found,” “procured,” “gained,” or, in R.S.V., “secured,” being nominative, masculine, singular, aorist, middle participle.

the warm blood, and so present the sacrifice to God. Similarly Christ must enter a sanctuary in order to present the sacrifice slain on Calvary.—*The Epistle to the Hebrews*, p. 135, in *The Expositor's Bible*.

Also Dr. H. B. Swete, Professor of Divinity, University of Cambridge, truly declared:

A gospel which ended with the story of the Cross would have had all the elevating power of infinite pathos and love. But the power of an endless life would have been wanting. It is the abiding life of our High Priest which makes His atoning Sacrifice operative, and is the unfailing spring of the life of justification and grace in all His true members upon earth.—*The Ascended Christ*, p. 51.

While we cannot fully understand the nature of Christ's priestly ministry, yet we know that He is our mediator, and the *only* mediator between God and man (1 Tim. 2:5). That ministry is a work of intercession (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25). He confesses us before the Father and claims us as His own (Rev. 3:5). He dispenses mercy and help from the throne of grace (Heb. 4:16). And in His capacity as High Priest, He gives His people power to overcome sin (1 Cor. 15:57; Rev. 3:21).

One of the key words in the study of the priesthood of Jesus is the word "better." He brought in a "better hope" (Heb. 7:19), and is the mediator of a "better covenant," which was established upon "better promises" (Heb. 8:6), and in that He became the surety of a "better testament" (Heb. 7:22).

#### IX. Jesus Becomes Our "Surety"

Christ became our surety (Heb. 7:22), and He Himself fulfilled all that the everlasting covenant required. As the "last Adam" (1 Cor. 15:45), He has

become one of Adam's race. And as our surety, He not only bore our sins and carried our sorrows on Calvary, but from the throne of grace dispenses His blessings and intercedes on our behalf.

He could rightly be "chosen out of the people" because He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Heb. 7:26). He came into humanity, not by natural generation, but by a miracle. His birth was supernatural; God was His Father. Although born in the flesh, He was nevertheless God, and was exempt from the inherited passions and pollutions that corrupt the natural descendants of Adam. He was "without sin," not only in His outward conduct, but in His very nature. He could truly say, "the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing [or "findeth no response"] in me" (John 14:30). There was nothing in Him that responded to the evil one. And just such a priest we needed. Had He been defiled by even the taint of sin, He would have been disqualified from being either our sacrifice or our High Priest. But though sinless in His life and in His nature, He was nevertheless "in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. 4:15). And because of that, He is able to sympathize with us in every sorrow or trial.

In order fully to discharge His priestly office, however, He, like ancient Israel's priest, must of necessity have "somewhat . . . to offer" (Heb. 8:3). When Aaron presented himself before the Lord in the typical service, he had to have the blood of a sacrifice. Likewise, when Jesus presented Himself before the Father on our behalf in the sanctuary in heaven, He too must have blood; but it was "by his own blood he entered

in" (Heb. 9:12). It was by "the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (1 Peter 1:19) that we were redeemed.

We have already noted that it was in the Garden of Gethsemane that the burden of the world's sin was rolled upon our Saviour. Of Him the apostle Peter says, "Who his own self bare our sins . . . on the tree" (1 Peter 2:24). Thus were our sins *imputed* to Him. He became "sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him" (2 Cor. 5:21). He accepted our sin and *bore it vicariously*, being both offering and priest. But in order fully to carry out His purpose for our redemption, He had to ascend into the heavenlies as our mediator. We are in full agreement with Arthur W. Pink who says:

Had Christ remained on earth after His resurrection, only half of His priestly work had been performed. His ascension was necessary for the maintenance of God's governmental rights, for the vindication of the Redeemer Himself, and for the well-being of His people; that what He had begun on earth might be continued, consummated and fully accomplished in heaven. The expiatory sacrifice of Christ had been offered once for all, but He must take His place as an Intercessor at God's right hand, if His Church should enjoy the benefits of it. . . . Had Christ stayed on earth, He had left His office imperfect, seeing that His people needed One to "appear in the presence of God" (9:24) for them. If Aaron had only offered sacrifice at the brazen altar, and had not carried the blood within the veil, he had left his work only half done.—*An Exposition of Hebrews*, vol. 1, pp. 433, 434.

#### X. The Place of Christ's Ministry

Now where and how does our Lord officiate? The Scripture leaves no room for speculation. He ministers in the heavenly sanctuary (Heb. 8:1, 2). So long as the ancient ritual continued, "the way into the holiest of

all [holy places] was not . . . made manifest" (Heb. 9:8).\*

Various translations reflect this thought:

And by this the Holy Spirit indicated, that the way to the holy [places] was not yet manifested, so long as the first tabernacle was standing.—Murdoch's Syriac.

The Holy Spirit meant us to see that no way of access to the true sanctuary lay open to us, as long as the former tabernacle maintained its standing.—KNOX.

Thus doth the Holy Spirit show forth that the way into the sanctuary is not yet disclosed, so long as the first tabernacle is yet standing: which latter is a type in view of the present time.—LATTEY.

The Holy Spirit signifying this, that the way of the holy places was not yet laid open, while the first tabernacle still standeth.—CAMPBELL, DODDRIDGE, and MACKNIGHT.

When our Lord expired on the cross, the veil of the earthly Temple was "rent in twain from the top to the bottom" (Matt. 27:51), revealing to all succeeding generations that the shadow had met the substance; type was fulfilled in antitype. For the first time the most holy place in the earthly sanctuary was no longer veiled from human gaze, and was no longer sacred. All that had been a barrier had now been broken down. We can now "come boldly unto the throne of grace" (Heb. 4:16), not with fear and dread, but with confidence and joy. "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith," "by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh" (Heb. 10:22, 20). When our Lord gave His flesh "for the life of the world" (John 6:51), the way

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\*The term "holiest of all," in the K.J.V., is an incorrect translation. The Greek form is plural—*tōn hagiōn*, "holies," or "holy places"—and is correctly rendered "holy places" in Hebrews 9:24. The contrast here is not between the holy place and the most holy place of the earthly tabernacle, but between the *earthly* sanctuary and the *heavenly* sanctuary.

into heaven was opened. "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

## XI. The Perfecting of Our Characters

As our exalted Lord, Christ shares the throne of Deity. Nevertheless He is our "advocate" (*paraklētos*, 1 John 2:1), representing us before the Father. The same word is translated "Comforter" in John 14:26. Jesus was speaking to the disciples about the Holy Spirit, who was to come to them as the *paraclete*, or "helper" (one who comes to the aid of, or stands by the side of, another). Both Jesus and the Holy Spirit minister in the capacity of advocate—our Saviour is an advocate with the Father, representing us at the Father's throne, while the Holy Spirit is our advocate, our helper here on earth, representing to lost mankind the Father and the Son. In the Gospel of John, *paraklētos* is rendered "comforter." But in his epistle it is translated "advocate." As our advocate and mediator, Jesus sends forth His Spirit into our hearts as both comforter and guide.

Perfection is God's aim for His people. Jesus said, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect" (Matt. 5:48). But the offering "of bulls and of goats" (Heb. 10:4), as such, could never make man perfect. Christ has done something for lost mankind that those sacrifices of old could never do. When he bore "our sins in his own body on the tree" (1 Peter 2:24), He blotted out "the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross" (Col. 2:14).

Christ's sacrifice in behalf of man was full and complete. The condition of the atonement had been fulfilled. The work for which He had come to this world had been accomplished. He had won the kingdom. He had wrested it from Satan, and had become heir of all things.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 29.

While Christ is “made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption” (1 Cor. 1:30), yet the only ones who are perfected or sanctified are those who fully accept of His grace. True, “he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them” (Heb. 7:25), yet those who would be saved must come unto God. They must “lay hold on eternal life” (1 Tim. 6:19). When we accept Him we are justified. That is, His righteousness is imputed to us, and we stand before God just as though we had never sinned. But only those who follow on and experience Him as an indwelling power, and who continually appropriate His grace for victory over their sinful natures, are sanctified or perfected. We agree with Arthur W. Pink, who says:

Justification and sanctification are never separated: where God imputes the righteousness of Christ, He also imparts a principle of holiness, the latter being the fruit or consequence of the former; both being necessary before we can be admitted into heaven. Because the blood of Christ has fully met every claim of God upon and against His people, its virtues and purifying effects are applied to them by the Spirit. . . . For the blood of Christ is not merely, so to speak, the key unlocking the holy of holies to Him as our High Priest and Redeemer, it is not merely our ransom by which we are delivered out of bondage, and, freed from the curse, are brought nigh unto God; but it also separates us from death and sin. It is incorruptible, always cleansing and vivifying; through this blood we are separated from this evil world, and overcome; by this blood we keep our garments white (John 6:53; Rev. 7:14).—ARTHUR W. PINK, *op. cit.*, pp. 494, 495.

Hence, while justification is *imputed* righteousness, sanctification is *imparted* righteousness.

Our Lord's perfection—His life of surrender and obedience—is all ours by faith. And these qualities of perfection He dispenses to His people from the place of His sanctuary. Our prayers, in some mysterious way associated with the altar of incense (Rev. 8:3, 4; compare Rev. 5:8) in the heavenly sanctuary, come up before the Lord and are intermingled with the virtues of His own spotless life. Ellen G. White clearly expresses the Adventist position in these impressive words:

Christ has pledged Himself to be our substitute and surety, and He neglects no one. He who could not see human beings exposed to eternal ruin without pouring out His soul unto death in their behalf, will look with pity and compassion upon every soul who realizes that he cannot save himself.

He will look upon no trembling suppliant without raising him up. He who through His own atonement provided for man an infinite fund of moral power, will not fail to employ this power in our behalf. We may take our sins and sorrows to His feet; for He loves us. His every look and word invites our confidence. He will shape and mold our characters according to His own will.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 157.

Christ has pledged Himself to be our substitute and surety, and He neglects no one. There is an inexhaustible fund of perfect obedience accruing from His obedience. In heaven His merits, His self-denial and self-sacrifice, are treasured as incense to be offered up with the prayers of His people. As the sinner's sincere, humble prayers ascend to the throne of God, Christ mingles with them the merits of His own life of perfect obedience. Our prayers are made fragrant by this incense. Christ has pledged Himself to intercede in our behalf, and the Father always hears the Son.—*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 22.

Christ our High Priest represents His people in the capacity of one who has authority. Having won the battle against the kingdom of darkness, He stands now

as the head of a new kingdom—the kingdom of light and peace. Ellen G. White likewise emphasizes this truth, declaring:

The Captain of our salvation is interceding for His people, not as a petitioner to move the Father to compassion, but as a conqueror, who claims the trophies of His victory.—*Gospel Workers*, p. 154.

By His spotless life, His obedience, His death on the cross of Calvary, Christ interceded for the lost race. And now, not as a mere petitioner does the Captain of our salvation intercede for us, but as a Conqueror claiming His victory. His offering is complete, and as our Intercessor He executes His self-appointed work, holding before God the censer containing His own spotless merits and the prayers, confessions, and thanksgiving of His people. Perfumed with the fragrance of His righteousness, these ascend to God as a sweet savor. The offering is wholly acceptable, and pardon covers all transgression.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 156.

### XII. Judgment Climaxes Christ's Ministry

This priestly ministry of our Lord, we believe, climaxes in a work of judgment. And this takes place just before He returns in glory. While He does not minister in “places made with hands” (Heb. 9:24), seeing He is sovereign Lord, yet the two types of ministry carried out in the ancient sanctuary—first, that of reconciliation in the holy place, and second, that of judgment in the most holy—illustrate very graphically the two phases of our Lord's ministry as High Priest. And then, that ministry finished, He comes in glory, bringing His rewards with Him.

### XIII. Ultimate Destruction of Sin

When our Saviour returns, not only will He take the ransomed home, but He will also finally destroy sin and eradicate every trace of evil. The universe itself will

ultimately be cleansed of even the dark record of rebellion and sin, and sinners will be no more. "The day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch" (Mal. 4:1).

*Adventists do not hold any theory of a dual atonement.* "Christ hath redeemed us" (Gal. 3:13) "once for all" (Heb. 10:10). But we believe that the full picture of our Lord's atonement and ministry is not always comprehended, even by those who most surely love Him and honor His Word. A cleansed creation, with the author of sin and all his evil hosts completely destroyed, reveals, we believe, the greatness and glory and power of our crucified and risen Lord. We look forward to that day when, with sin abolished, every voice in the universe will join the song of redemption, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain."

Our ears strain to catch the sound of that paean of praise, which, as the prophet John declares, begins at the throne of God, then sweeps out into the far-flung universe, until "every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, [are] heard . . . saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever" (Rev. 5:13).

# The Meaning of Azazel

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## QUESTION 34

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*Are not Seventh-day Adventists alone in teaching that the scapegoat, or Azazel, represents Satan?*

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No, Seventh-day Adventists are not alone in believing that Azazel represents Satan. Let us take a look at the word and its origin.

In the K.J.V. the word used to designate the second goat in the ritual of the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:10) is called the "scapegoat"; in the R.V. and the A.R.V., and in most other translations, the word is rendered "Azazel," which is the transliteration of the Hebrew word.

ETYMOLOGY OF THE WORD NOT CLEAR.—The word "Azazel" has been the subject of much dispute and conjecture through the centuries. Many scholars agree that it is "a phrase of unusual difficulty" (SMITH AND PELOUBET, *A Dictionary of the Bible*, p. 65); "the origin and meaning of the goat 'for Azazel' are indeed obscure" (GEORGE B. STEVENS, *The Christian Doctrine of Salvation*, p. 11); "that its etymology is not clear" (T. W. CHAMBERS, "Satan in the Old Testament," *Presbyterian and Reformed Review*, vol. 3, p. 26). Note the following:

Etymology, origin and significance are still matters of conjecture. The A.V. [K.J.V.] designation *scapegoat* (i.e. the goat that is allowed to escape, which goes back to *caper emissarius* of the Vulgate) obscures the fact that the word *Azazel* is a proper name in the original, and in particular the name of a powerful spirit or demon.—A. R. S. KENNEDY, Hastings *Dictionary of the Bible* (one volume), p. 77.

HOW “SCAPEGOAT” CAME INTO THE K.J.V.—The translation in the text of the King James Version is “scapegoat.” The dictionary meaning of this word is “scape,” coming from the Old English—*scapen*. Chaucer used it in the expression “help us to scape.” (*Century Dictionary Encyclopedia*.) “Scapegoat. . . . From Scape . . . a mutilated form of *escape*.” (W. W. SKEAT, *Etymological Dictionary in the English Language*.)

This gives us the concept of a goat that escaped, the idea being that the goat was sent away into the wilderness, and allowed to go free. Later, “scapegoat” came to mean “a person or thing bearing blame for others” (Webster’s Dictionary).

Tyndale was evidently the first to use the word “scapegoat” in any English translation:

Apparently invented by Tyndale (1530) to express what he believed to be the literal meaning of Hebrew . . . Azazel, occurring only in Lev. 16:8, 10 (in vs. 10 he renders: “The goote on which the lotte fell to scape.”). The same interpretation is expressed by the Vulgate *caper emissarius* (whence the Fr., *bouc emissaire*), and by Coverdale’s (1535) rendering “the fregoate,” but is now regarded as untenable. The word does not appear in the Revised Version of 1884, which has “Azazel” (as a proper name), in the text, and “dismissal” in the margin, as an alternative rendering.—*Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. 9, p. 180.

Tyndale, however, so far as this chapter in Leviticus is concerned, was evidently influenced more by the Vulgate, the basis of Roman Catholic translations of

the Scriptures, rather than by the original Hebrew Scriptures, which have been used by Protestants and others. The Latin Vulgate, which, after all, is a secondary source—being itself but a translation—renders the term “Azazel” by *caper emissarius*, which is used for “scapegoat,” or “Azazel,” in Leviticus 16:8, and means the emissary goat or the goat that escaped.

“SCAPEGOAT” OBSCURES THE THOUGHT.—Many scholars feel that the word “scapegoat” does not properly convey the thought of the Hebrew text; some even feel it is misleading. The critical scholar Dr. S. R. Driver comments:

An evil spirit, supposed to dwell in the wilderness. The word occurs only here in the O.T. . . . The rendering *scape-goat*, derived through Jerome from Symmachus, is certainly incorrect; it does not suit v. 26, and implies a derivation opposed to the genius of the Hebrew language, as though Azazel were a compound word. . . . Moreover, the marked antithesis between *for Azazel* and *for JHVH*, does not leave it open to doubt that the former is conceived as a personal being.—*Book of Leviticus*, p. 81.

A scholar of the evangelical school declares, in the *Sunday School Times*, that to render “Azazel” by the word “scapegoat” is misleading:

The goat for Azazel, the Scapegoat, as it is sometimes misleadingly translated, typifies God’s challenge to Satan. (John 1:8; Eph. 3:10.)—J. RUSSELL HOWDEN, in *Sunday School Times*, Jan. 15, 1927.

THE NAME “AZAZEL.”—The testimony of many scholars of the past, both Jewish and Christian, as well as many of the present, is to this effect:

a. *That Azazel Refers to a Person.*

*The Jewish authority Dr. M. M. Kalisch.*—There can be no doubt whatever that Azazel is a *personal, a superhuman*, and an

evil being—in fact a wicked demon. . . . It was approved of by early Christian writers who identified Azazel with Satan (*Origen. C. Cels. VI. 43*, p. 305 ed. Spencer; *Iren. Adv. Haer. I. 12*; *Epiph. Haeres XXXIV. 11*), and by many later and modern scholars.—*A Historical and Critical Commentary on the Old Testament*, vol. 2, pp. 328, 329.

“*International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*.”—By the use of the same preposition . . . in connection with Jehovah and Azazel, it seems natural . . . to think of some personal being.—“Azazel,” vol. 1, p. 343.

*Smith and Peloubet’s “A Dictionary of the Bible.”*—The best modern scholars agree that it designates the *personal being* to whom the goat was sent, probably Satan.—Page 65.

*b. That Azazel Refers to Satan.*

*J. Russell Howden (Church of England).*—The goat for Azazel, as it is sometimes misleadingly translated typifies God’s challenge to Satan.

Of the two goats, one was for Jehovah, signifying God’s acceptance of the sin-offering; the other was for Azazel. This is probably to be understood as a person, being parallel with Jehovah in the preceding clause. So Azazel is probably a synonym for Satan.—*Sunday School Times*, Jan. 15, 1927.

*Samuel M. Zwemer (Presbyterian).*—The devil (Sheitan, or Iblis) has a proper name—Azazel. He was expelled from Eden.—*Islam, a Challenge to Faith*, p. 89.

*E. W. Hengstenberg (Lutheran).*—The manner in which the phrase “for Azazel” is contrasted with “for Jehovah,” necessarily requires that Azazel should designate a personal existence and if so, only Satan can be intended. If by Azazel, Satan is not meant, there is no reason for the lots that were cast. We can then see no reason why the decision was referred to God, why the high priest did not simply assign one goat for a sin offering, and the other for sending away into the desert.—*Egypt and the Books of Moses*, pp. 170, 171.

*J. B. Rotherham (Disciples of Christ?).*—“And one lot for Azazel” (Lev. xvi. 8).—It seems impossible to dissent from the opinion that “Azazel,” instead of being a name for the (e)scape goat, is the name or title of an evil Being, opposed to Yahweh, to whom the live goat on the great Day of Propitiation was sent. Admitting so much, it still remains to inquire into the meaning

of this very peculiar but impressive ceremony of sending the living goat to Azazel. Assuming that Satan is represented by Azazel—and there does not appear anything else which biblically we can assume—it is most important to observe that there is here no sacrifice offered to the evil spirit.—*The Emphasized Bible*, vol. 3, p. 918.

William Jenks (*Congregationalist*).—Scapegoat. See different opinion in Bochart. Spencer, after the oldest opinions of the Hebrews and Christian, thinks *Azazel* is the name of *the devil*, and so Rosenmuller, whom see. The Syriac has *Azzail*, the “*angel (strong one) who revolted*.”—*The Comprehensive Commentary of the Holy Bible*, p. 410.

“*Abingdon Bible Commentary*” (*Methodist*).—On the goats lots are to be cast, one for *Jehovah*, and the other for *Azazel*. The translation *dismissal* in the R.V. mg. here (cf. *removal* in A.S.V. mg.) is inadmissible, being based on a false etymology. What the word meant is unknown, but it should be retained as the proper name of a wilderness demon.—Page 289.

Mention might be made also of William Milligan, James Hastings, and William Smith, of the Presbyterian Church; Elmer Flack and H. C. Alleman, of the Lutheran Church; Charles Beecher and F. N. Peloubet, of the Congregational Church; George A. Barton, of the Society of Friends; John M'Clintock and James Strong, of the Methodist Church; James M. Gray, of the Reformed Episcopal Church; and a host of others who have expressed themselves in the same way. Adventists, during the years, have been in full accord with the expressions of such eminent theologians and scholars on this matter.

# The Transaction With the Scapegoat

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## QUESTION 35

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*What is the actual teaching of Seventh-day Adventists regarding the “scapegoat” in the sanctuary service? Do you hold that the sins of the righteous are rolled back on Satan, so that in the end he becomes your sin bearer?*

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We take our stand without qualification on the gospel platform that the death of Jesus Christ provides the *sole* propitiation for our sins (1 John 2:2; 4:10); that there is salvation through no other means or medium, and no other name by which we may be saved (Acts 4:12); and that the shed blood of Jesus Christ *alone* brings remission for our sins (Matt. 26:28). That is foundational.

Further, we hold to the recognized principle that no cardinal doctrine or belief should be based primarily upon a parable or type, but upon the clear unfigurative statements of Scripture, and understood and defined in the light of explicit declarations of gospel realities. In other words, the type should be understood in the light of the antitype, and not the reverse. Moreover, no parable or type can be applied in all details. It is the central truth that is to be sought out and applied. And it might be added that we do not

place upon the scapegoat the emphasis that some of our critics would indicate.

The transaction with the scapegoat, or Azazel (Lev. 16:8), springs from the annual typical sanctuary service of ancient Israel. These types were simply dramatized symbols, or prophetic parables, of the great gospel realities to take place in this dispensation. Thus the ancient Passover lamb typified "Christ our passover" (1 Cor. 5:7), who was slain for us. And the services of the ministering priests symbolized our great High Priest, Jesus Christ, who, after the sacrifice of Himself at Calvary, now ministers for us in the heavenlies (Hebrews 8 and 9).

In Leviticus 16, two goats entered into the service of the great Day of Atonement. One, in type, made atonement for sin. The other goat, for Azazel, was not slain, but was kept alive, and hence made no atonement for anyone's sins.

The first goat represented our Lord Jesus Christ, who, on the cross, made atonement for our sins. The other goat, in *antithesis*, symbolized Satan, who must bear the responsibility not only for his own sins but for his part in all the sins he has caused others, both righteous and wicked, to commit. This live goat, it is to be remembered, was not slain. (Many outstanding authorities support our understanding that the live goat, or Azazel, typified Satan. See Question 34.)

Two goats were obviously required, and used, on the Day of Atonement, because there is a *twofold responsibility for sin*—first, my responsibility as the *perpetrator*, agent, or medium; and second, Satan's responsibility as the *instigator*, or tempter, in whose

heart sin was first conceived. When Satan tempted our first parents to take and eat of the forbidden fruit, he as well as they had an inescapable responsibility in that act—he the instigator, and they the perpetrators. And similarly through the ages—in all sin Satan is involved in responsibility, as the originator and instigator, or tempter (John 8:44; Rom. 6:16; 1 John 3:8).

Now concerning my sin, Christ died for *my* sins (Rom. 5:8). He was wounded for *my* transgressions and bore *my* iniquities (Isaiah 53). He assumed *my* responsibilities, and His blood alone cleanses *me* from all sin (1 John 1:7). The atonement for *my* sin is made solely by the shed blood of Christ.

And concerning Satan's sin, and his responsibility as instigator and tempter, no salvation is provided for him. He must be punished for his responsibility. There is no savior, or substitute, to bear his punishment. He must himself "atone" for his sin in causing men to transgress, in the same way that a master criminal suffers on the gallows or in the electric chair for his responsibility in the crimes that he has caused others to commit. It is in this sense only that we can understand the words of Leviticus 16:10 concerning the scapegoat, "to make an atonement with him."

Courts of law recognize the principle of dual responsibility. Thus a criminal father may teach his child to steal, and the child becomes a habitual thief; or a dissolute mother may teach her daughter to engage in professional prostitution. Parental responsibility in such cases is crystal clear. The instigator of a crime is punished, as well as the instrument that actually committed the act. When the members of

“Murder Incorporated” were brought to book for a whole succession of killings, the master mind, who had never technically taken a life, went to the chair as instigator, along with the perpetrators. And under criminal law, the instigator, or master mind, may be punished more severely than his agents.

In like manner, Satan is the responsible master mind in the great crime of sin, and his responsibility will return upon his own head. The crushing weight of his responsibility in the sins of the whole world—of the wicked as well as of the righteous—must be rolled back upon him. Simple justice demands that while Christ suffers for my guilt, Satan must also be punished as the instigator of sin.

That is why, on the Day of Atonement, two goats were necessary. One was “for the Lord” (Lev. 16:7) to provide the atonement through the shedding of his blood; the other was “for Azazel” (Lev. 16:8, margin). These two were, in the text, placed *in antithesis*. One typified our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who was slain as our substitute and vicariously bore our sins, with all the guilt and punishment entailed. Thus He made complete atonement for our sins. The other goat, we believe, stood for Satan, who is eventually to have rolled back upon his own head, not only his own sins, but the responsibility for all the sins he has caused others to commit.

Now two vital points involved are to be particularly noted: (1) that the transaction with the live goat (or Azazel) took place *after* the atonement for the sins of the people had been accomplished, and the reconciliation completed; and (2) that the live goat was *not*

*slain*, and did not provide any propitiation or make any vicarious atonement. And without the shedding of blood there is no remission (Heb. 9:22). None of the blood of the live goat was shed, or poured out in propitiation, and none was taken into the sanctuary and sprinkled before the Lord, or placed on the horns of the altar.

Satan makes no atonement for our sins. But Satan will ultimately have to bear the retributive punishment for his responsibility in the sins of all men, both righteous and wicked.

Seventh-day Adventists therefore repudiate *in toto* any idea, suggestion, or implication that Satan is in any sense or degree our sin bearer. The thought is abhorrent to us, and appallingly sacrilegious. Such a concept is a dreadful disparagement of the efficacy of Christ and His salvation, and vitiates the whole glorious provision of salvation solely through our Saviour.

Satan's death, a thousand times over, could never make him a savior in any sense whatsoever. He is the archsinner of the universe, the author and instigator of sin. Even if he had never sinned, he still could never save others. Not even the highest of the holy angels could atone for our sins. Only Christ, the Creator, the one and only God-man, could make a substitutionary atonement for men's transgressions. And this Christ did completely, perfectly, and once for all, on Golgotha.

It is our primary concern that all men shall come to a knowledge of full salvation in and through Jesus Christ. Just how God finally disposes of sin, although an interesting subject to contemplate, is something we

can safely leave to the infinite justice and mercy of God. It is evidently revealed in part in the typical transaction of the scapegoat. But our fundamental concern is that all who will respond shall come under the full atoning provisions of the shed blood of Jesus Christ our Lord.

# The Investigative Judgment in the Setting of the Arminian Concept

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## QUESTION 36

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*Since Seventh-day Adventists hold largely to the principles of the Arminian, rather than the Calvinist, position concerning the human will, in what way does this affect your understanding of the judgment?*

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### PART ONE

#### Man's Free Will and the Judgment

The divergent views classified under "Calvinism" and "Arminianism" have roots that reach a long way back in church history—as far back as Augustine. Through the subsequent centuries theologians have ranged themselves on one side or the other. But these theological concepts came to head-on collision in Holland in the early years of the seventeenth century, when Arminius attacked the Calvinist teaching of divine decrees involving the human will.

##### I. Five-Point Outline of Calvinistic Predestination

In his 1537 *Instruction in Faith* (Paul T. Fuhrmann tr., 1949, p. 36), John Calvin says:

For, the seed of the word of God takes root and brings forth fruit only in those whom the Lord, by his eternal election, has

predestined to be children and heirs of the heavenly kingdom. To all the others (who by the same counsel of God are rejected before the foundation of the world) the clear and evident preaching of truth can be nothing but an odor of death unto death.

John Calvin was one of the most brilliant personalities among the sixteenth-century Reformers. But his teaching on predestination became the subject of bitter controversy in later years. In 1610 the famous Remonstrance was drawn up, and presented to the States-General of Holland, in which were outlined five vital points in Calvinistic theology. These were declared offensive, some at that time claiming to have found in the Calvinistic Catechism and the Belgic Confession certain points that appeared as somewhat new theology. These were set forth as follows:

1. That God (as some asserted) had ordered by an eternal and irreversible decree, some from among men (whom He did not consider as created; much less as fallen) to everlasting life; and some (who were by far the greater part) to everlasting perdition without any regard to their obedience or disobedience, in order to exert both His justice and mercy; having so disposed the means, that those whom He had appointed to salvation should be necessarily and unavoidably saved, and the rest necessarily and unavoidably damned.

2. That God (as others taught) had considered mankind not only as created but as fallen in Adam, and consequently as liable to the curse; from which fall and destruction He had determined to release some, and to save them as instances of His mercy; and to leave others, even children of the Covenant, under the curse as examples of His justice, without any regard to belief or unbelief. To which end God also made use of means whereby the elect were necessarily saved and the reprobate were necessarily damned.

3. That, consequently, Jesus Christ the Saviour of the World did not die for all men, but only for those who were elected according to the first or second manner.

4. That therefore the Spirit of God and Christ wrought in the elect by an irresistible force in order to make them believe and be saved, but that necessary and sufficient grace was not given to the reprobate.

5. That they who had once received a true faith could never lose it wholly or finally.—A. W. HARRISON, *The Beginnings of Arminianism* (1926), pp. 149, 150.

This position, however, was not original with Calvin. A thousand years earlier, according to G. F. Wiggers, Augustine expressed the same idea:

Augustine introduced into the ecclesiastical system several views entirely new. . . . Amongst them were irresistible grace, absolute fore-ordination and the limitation of redemption by Christ to the elect.—*An Historical Presentation of Augustinism and Pelagianism*, p. 368.

## II. Arminianism's Rebuttal in Five Counterpoints

In opposing these views Arminius and his associates drew up a rebuttal which was presented in five counterpoints. These later became the epitome of what was known as Arminianism. These were as follows:

1. That God, by an eternal and unchangeable decree in Christ before the world was, determined to elect from the fallen and sinning human race to everlasting life those who through His grace believe in Jesus Christ and persevere in faith and obedience; and, on the contrary, had resolved to reject the unconverted and unbelievers to everlasting damnation (John iii, 36).

2. That, in consequence of this, Christ the Saviour of the world died for all and every man, so that He obtained, by the death on the cross, reconciliation and pardon for sin for all men; in such manner, however, that none but the faithful actually enjoyed the same (John iii, 16; 1 John ii, 2).

3. That man could not obtain saving faith of himself or by the strength of his own free will, but stood in need of God's grace through Christ to be renewed in thought and will (John xv, 5).

4. That this grace was the cause of the beginning, progress and completion of man's salvation; insomuch that none could believe nor persevere in faith without this co-operating grace,

and consequently that all good works must be ascribed to the grace of God in Christ. As to the manner of the operation of that grace, however, it is not irresistible (Acts vii, 51).

5. That true believers had sufficient strength through the Divine grace to fight against Satan, sin, the world, their own flesh, and get the victory over them; but whether by negligence they might not apostatize from the true Faith, lose the happiness of a good conscience and forfeit that grace needed to be more fully inquired into according to Holy Writ before they proceeded to teach it.—HARRISON, *op. cit.*, pp. 150, 151.

This controversy, which became active with Arminius in 1603, reached its height in the Synod of Dort in 1618 and 1619, and had far-reaching results. Not only did the Dutch church feel its effects, but the German, Swiss, Scotch, English, and French sections of the Christian church all participated in, or were divided by, this controversy. Since then, Arminianism has become an expression for theological concepts that are the opposite of Calvinism. However, the followers of Arminius went further in their declarations than did Arminius himself. In fact, he would be surprised, even shocked, could he read the theological interpretations of some who have since been classified as Arminian. And the same principle holds with reference to the followers of Calvin. Present-day Calvinism seems to be more modified even than is Arminianism.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church is neither Calvinist nor totally Arminian in theology. Recognizing the virtues of each, we have endeavored to assimilate that which to us appears to be the clear teaching of the Word of God. While we believe John Calvin was one of the greatest of the Protestant Reformers, we do not share his view that some men “are predestinated to eternal death without any demerit of their own, merely by his

sovereign will" (*CALVIN, Institutes*, bk. 3, ch. 23, par. 2). Or that men "are not all created with a similar destiny; but eternal life is fore-ordained for some, and eternal damnation for others" (*ibid.*, bk. 3, ch. 21, par. 5).

On the contrary, we believe that salvation is available to any and all members of the human race, for "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). We rejoice with the apostle Paul that "before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4) God had purposed to meet man's need, should he sin. This "eternal purpose" involved the incarnation of God in Christ, the sinless life and all-atoning death of Christ, His resurrection from the dead, and His priestly ministry in heaven, which ministry will climax in the great scenes of the judgment.

Our teaching on the subject of the judgment is, we feel, entirely scriptural, and is the logical and inevitable conclusion of our free-will concept. We are persuaded that as individuals we each are held accountable to God. The apostle Paul says: "We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Rom. 14:10-12).

### III. Human Race Lost Through Adam's Sin

Adam's sin involved the whole human race. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin," declares the apostle Paul (Rom. 5:12). The expres-

sion “by sin” shows clearly that he is referring, not to actual individual sins, but rather to the sinful nature that we all inherited from Adam. “In Adam all die” (1 Cor. 15:22). Because of Adam’s sin, “death passed upon all men” (Rom. 5:12).

It was to meet man in his need, and to save the race from eternal death, that the Eternal Word became incarnate. Christ lived as a man among men, then died in man’s stead. The substitutionary death of our Lord is the very heart of the gospel. When by faith we receive Him, then His death becomes our death—“If one died for all, then were all dead” (2 Cor. 5:14). The Scriptures reveal that as far-reaching as was the effect of Adam’s sin, just so far-reaching is the effect of free grace.

Scripture says, “As by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one [Jesus Christ] the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life” (Rom. 5:18). But if we would “reign in life” (verse 17), we must accept that “gift of righteousness.” And the apostle John quotes the Lord as saying, “Whosoever *will*, let him *take* the water of life freely” (Rev. 22:17). The only way we can take of that life is to take *Him* who is the *Author* of life. “And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life” (1 John 5:11, 12). This gift of life, we understand, is available to all, yet only those who lay hold upon that gift—those who accept the divine provision—have eternal life.

From Adam we all have inherited a sinful nature.

We all are "by nature the children of wrath" (Eph. 2:3). Whether we be Jews or Gentiles, we are "all under sin." "There is none that seeketh after God. . . . There is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Rom. 3:9, 11, 12). Consequently all are "guilty before God" (verse 19). But if men will only accept God's free gift of righteousness, then no matter how far they have drifted from God, or how deeply they have become imbedded in sin, they can still be justified, for Christ's righteousness, if accepted, is accounted as theirs. Such is the matchless grace of God.

When Paul speaks of the justification that is ours in Christ, he says, first, that we are "justified freely by his grace" (Rom. 3:24), for grace is the *source*. Next, he says that we are "justified by faith" (Rom. 5:1), for faith is the *method*. Then he climaxes all by saying that we are "justified by his blood" (verse 9), for blood is the *means*. James adds another quality, declaring that "by works a man is justified, and not by faith only" (James 2:24). But works are the *evidence*, not the means, of justification. All of these vital factors combined, operate in the life of the believer, and all who will may enter into this glorious experience.

#### IV. The Provisions for Our Redemption

We believe the Bible teaches that no man need ever be lost because of Adam's failure, for through Christ's redemptive work provision has been made for all to accept of the grace of God by which they can be delivered from sin and reinstated into the family of heaven. When the apostle John wrote about Christ Jesus being "the propitiation for our sins," that is, the

sins of believers, the declaration was made that reconciling atonement, or propitiation, was not for our sins only but also for the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2).

The tragic fact, however, is that not all will accept that sacrifice and receive eternal life. Jesus said, “Ye *will not come* to me, that ye might have life” (John 5:40). In His yearning appeal He said, “How often would I have gathered thy children together . . . and *ye would not*” (Matt. 23:37). And later Stephen charged those Pharisees with being stiff-necked and always resisting the Holy Ghost (Acts 7:51). Thus on Biblical testimony we conclude they were not *compelled* to resist the Spirit; they *chose* to resist. We agree with Arminius who said:

5. All unregenerate persons have freedom of will, and a capability of resisting the Holy Spirit, of rejecting the proffered grace of God, of despising the counsel of God against themselves, of refusing to accept the gospel of grace, and of not opening to Him who knocks at the door of the heart; and these things they can actually do, without any difference of *the elect* and *the reprobate*.—*The Writings of James Arminius* (Baker, 1956), vol. 2, p. 497.

The apostle Peter, speaking of the long-suffering of our Lord, declared that He is “not willing that any should perish, but that *all* should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9). That message is not confined to the New Testament; it is just as real in the Old Testament. “As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live” (Eze. 33:11). But when the wicked man repents and turns from his wicked way, by that very act he becomes a son of God and places himself

where the Spirit of God can lead him to do the will of God. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom. 8:14).

It is important that we learn "what the will of the Lord is" (Eph. 5:17). Writing to the Thessalonians Paul said, "This is the will of God, even your sanctification" (1 Thess. 4:3). The gospel of Christ is good news, telling how God can take a lost soul, one who is His enemy by nature, and after forgiving his sin can so change his life that not only will he be cleansed from every defilement, but through growth in grace he will be conformed to the image of his Lord.

#### V. Divine Grace Both Justifies and Sanctifies

The first work of grace is justification. The continuing work of grace in the life is sanctification. Some who start on the way of God and rejoice in the thought of being justified, fail to appropriate the indwelling power of Christ by which alone they can be sanctified. The result is that at last they are found unworthy. That is why the apostle said, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" (2 Cor. 13:5). Jesus said, "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but *he that doeth the will of my Father* which is in heaven" (Matt. 7:21).

The grace of God is given to the believer that he may lay aside every weight, and the sin that does so easily beset him, and run with patience the race that is set before him (Heb. 12:1). The power of the Holy Spirit enables him to experience victory over sin now,

and to live a life wholly consecrated to God. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Titus 2:11, 12). By grace we are justified, and by that same grace we are made "a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14). And through the indwelling of the Spirit of God we are conformed to the image of Him who called us from darkness to His marvelous light. Again we quote Arminius:

It is this grace which operates on the mind, the affections, and the will; which infuses good thoughts into the mind, inspires good desires into the affections, and bends the will to carry into execution good thoughts and good desires. . . . It averts temptations, assists and grants succor in the midst of temptations, sustains man against the flesh, the world and Satan, and in this great contest grants to man the enjoyment of the victory. . . . This grace commences salvation, promotes it, and perfects and consummates it.—*The Writings of James Arminius*, vol. 2, pp. 472, 473.

When Christ is living in the heart of one who is a true citizen of God's kingdom it will be abundantly evident, for every word and act will be under the control of the Holy Spirit. This is what the Lord expects of His people, for "he that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked" (1 John 2:6). The great apostle says, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him" (Col. 2:6).

John Wesley expresses the thought tersely in one of his sermons:

By justification we are saved from the guilt of sin, and restored to the favour of God; by sanctification we are saved

from the power and root of sin and restored to the image of God.—*Sermons: "On Working Out Our Own Salvation."*

Then, speaking of our love to God, he says:

That love increases more and more, till we “grow up in all things into him that is our head”; till we “attain the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.”—*Ibid.*

In fact, “growth in grace,” in the understanding of Wesley, was not merely a privilege but an absolute prerequisite to the retention of the “great salvation.”

#### VI. Man, Once Saved, Can Turn Back to the World

Jesus said, “He that endureth to the end shall be saved” (Matt. 10:22; see also Matt. 24:13; Mark 13:13). Not only is there to be a beginning of the Christian life, but there must be a continuing in the word of God.

As we understand it, two courses are open to men: (1) “To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality” God will grant “eternal life” (Rom. 2:7), “the gift of God” (Rom. 6:23); and (2) “unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness,” God will mete out “indignation and wrath” (Rom. 2:8).

Salvation is *freely offered to all men*, but they receive it only by accepting Christ Jesus as Lord. And having received it, they are to “follow on to know the Lord” (Hosea 6:3). This is frequently emphasized by various “if” texts of the Bible. Thus: “But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, *if we hold fast* the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end” (Heb. 3:6); “For we are made partakers

of Christ, *if we hold* the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end" (verse 14); "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, *If ye continue* in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed" (John 8:31); "*If ye abide* in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (John 15:7); "*If ye keep* my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love" (verse 10). It seems clear to us, therefore, that man, once saved, can turn back to the world.

If this is not so, there are several scriptures that would be difficult to understand, or to harmonize with the general teaching of the Bible.

Thus there is the text: "But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Cor. 9:27). The "castaway," in this text, is from the Greek *adokimos*, which is rendered "rejected" (Heb. 6:8), and "reprobate"\*\* (2 Cor. 13:5, 6; Rom. 1:28).

\*Some maintain that this simply means "disapproved," or "put aside," as one who has served a useful purpose in God's cause but who now is a "castaway," being put to one side; and that this does not involve his standing as a child of God.

Other renderings of the Greek, however, seem to us to make such an interpretation impossible. *Adokimos* is rendered "reprobate" no less than six times. And the context in each instance is such that it could *not* apply to a true child of God. Note:

Rom. 1:28—"God gave them over to a *reprobate* mind"—a reference to men abandoned to iniquity.

2 Cor. 13:5—"Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be *reprobate*"; also verses 6 and 7—which cannot refer to a born-again Christian, for he is not in the faith, Christ is not in him, but he is living in sin.

2 Tim. 3:8—"Men of corrupt minds, *reprobate* concerning the faith" (here are men who resist the truth, men who are corrupt).

Titus 1:16—"Unto every good work *reprobate*." Can this refer to a Christian believer? Note that such a one denies God, is abominable, disobedient, deceived, and against every good work.

Matthew Henry well remarks on Romans 1:28:

\*\* "Here he [Paul] subjoins a black list of those unbecoming things which the Gentiles were guilty of, being delivered up to a *reprobate* mind. No wickedness so heinous, so contrary to the light of nature, to the law of nations, and to all the interests of mankind, but a *reprobate* mind will comply with it."

Matthew Henry comments on 1 Corinthians 9:27:

A preacher of salvation may yet miss it. He may shew others the way to heaven, and never get thither himself. To prevent this, Paul took so much pains in subduing and keeping under bodily inclinations, lest by any means he himself, who had preached to others, should yet miss the crown, be disapproved and rejected by his sovereign Judge. A holy fear of himself was necessary to preserve the fidelity of an apostle; and how much more necessary is it to our preservation! Note, Holy fear of ourselves, and not presumptuous confidence, is the best security against apostacy from God, and final rejection by him.

Another text that must be considered is Hebrews 10:28, 29: "He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"

On this, Dean Henry Alford properly comments:

There is but One true sacrifice for sins: if a man, having availed himself of that One, then deliberately casts it behind him, there is no second left for him. It will be observed that one thing is not, and need not be, specified in the text. That he has exhausted the virtue of the One Sacrifice, is not said: but in proportion to his willing rejection of it, has it ceased to operate for him. He has in fact . . . shut the door of repentance behind him, by the very fact of his being in an abiding state of willing sin. And this is still more forcibly brought out when . . . the scene of action is transferred to the great day of the Lord's coming, and he is found in that impenitent state irreparably.—*The Greek Testament* (1875), p. 707.

One more text—Ezekiel 18:20-24: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be

upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live. Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord God: and not that he should return from his ways, and live? But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die."

In these verses, two men are brought to view. The one, a wicked man who turns from his sin and becomes obedient to God. He is forgiven; and if he walks in the way of righteousness, none of his former sins will ever be mentioned unto him. The other, a righteous man who turns from the path of righteousness, and goes back into sin. If he continues in iniquity, none of his previous manifestations of goodness will ever be mentioned. He forfeits all the blessings of salvation and goes down into death (verse 24).

Dr. H. A. Redpath (*The Westminster Commentaries*, on Eze. 18:24), says:

All his [the righteous'] previous goodness will not count: he shall die in his sins: . . . "if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the last state is become worse . . . than the first."

**VII. Christians Counseled to Make Their Election Sure**

The apostle Peter, evidently sensing a possibility of failure in the Christian life, writes to those who had been “purged” from their “old sins,” urging them to give diligence to make their calling and election sure (2 Peter 1:9, 10). And this, by divine grace, they can do. He says, “Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity” (verses 5-7). Then he says: “For if ye *do* these things, ye shall never fall: for *so* an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (verses 10, 11). Therefore, we believe that to make our entrance into the everlasting kingdom sure, we must by the indwelling of Christ grow in grace and Christian virtues.

He closes his letter with a warning, reminding them that some unlearned and unstable were wresting the Scriptures to their own destruction (2 Peter 3:16). Then he says, “Beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ” (verses 17, 18).

Paul sets forth the same principle in his epistles, although it is stated in different language. He tells us to put on the whole armor of God; to fight the good fight of faith; to watch unto prayer; to search the Scriptures diligently; to flee from temptation and turn away from ungodliness; and as citizens of God’s kingdom to yield ourselves to the control of the King that

we might live out the principles of His kingdom. To do any of these things, even the least of them, we need the enabling power of the indwelling Spirit. But doing right, complying with God's commandments, meeting any or all of the conditions we have mentioned, has never saved a soul—nor can it ever preserve a saint. Salvation proceeds wholly from God, and is a gift from God received by faith. Yet having accepted that gift of grace, and with Christ dwelling in his heart, the believer lives a life of victory over sin. By the grace of God he walks in the path of righteousness.

While Adventists rejoice that we receive salvation by grace, and grace alone, we also rejoice that by that same grace we obtain present victory over our sins, as well as over our sinful nature. And through that same grace we are enabled to endure unto the end and be presented "faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 24).

The great judgment scene of heaven will clearly reveal those who have been growing in grace and developing Christlike characters. Some who have professed to be God's people, but who have disregarded His counsel, will in amazement say to the Lord, "Have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?" His reply to such will be brief but emphatic: "I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:22, 23). Since they have proved themselves unworthy of His kingdom, the Lord in His justice can do nothing else but reject them. They *could have done the will of God* but they *chose their own willful way*.

### VIII. Christian Believer's Relation to the Judgment

A real born-again Christian, whose life is now directed and controlled by the Holy Spirit, who walks “worthy of the Lord” (Col. 1:10), is in a unique relationship to Christ, his Lord and Master. He is “in Christ” (2 Cor. 5:17), and Christ dwells in him (Col. 1:27).

This is a seeming paradox, yet the figures are beautifully true. Even nature provides illustrations of this wonderful, soul-satisfying truth. When a sponge is immersed in water, it becomes a question as to whether the water is in the sponge, or the sponge in the water. Both conditions exist. In like manner, if we are surrendered to God, and Christ is dwelling within the heart, the experience of the apostle Paul can be ours—“I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me” (Gal. 2:20).

Christ having taken our guilt and borne the punishment of our iniquities, sin has no more dominion over us—provided we remain “in him.” He is our security. And as long as this attitude of submission is maintained, there is no power on earth that can detach the soul from Christ. No man can pluck the believer out of the Saviour’s hands (John 10:28).

But does this mean that the Christian will not come into judgment at all? Some believe this, and they base their concept on John 5:24. In this text—“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life”—the Greek word for “condemnation” is *krisis*, and is usually rendered “judgment.” It is

therefore felt by many Christian scholars that the proper understanding of this verse is ". . . shall not come into judgment."

It is true that the Greek *krisis* is more often rendered in the Bible by the word "judgment" than by any other expression. And it is used quite often in reference to the "day of judgment." However, this is not absolute, for *krisis* does have other shades of meaning. For instance, it is rendered "accusation" (Jude 9; 2 Peter 2: 11) and "damnation" (Matt. 23:33; Mark 3:29; John 5:29). It is also rendered "condemnation" in John 5: 24, also in John 3:19 and James 5:12. So while "judgment" is the prevailing idea, there is the concept of "accusation" made at such a judgment session, and hence of the individual's being under "condemnation" because of the sentence of the judgment; and still further, of "damnation," the punishment meted out to the offender.

It is consequently our understanding that the thought in John 5:24 is best rendered by the word "condemnation" in the sense in which the same Greek word *krisis* is rendered in John 3:19: "And this is the *condemnation*, that light is come"; and in James 5:12: ". . . lest ye fall into *condemnation*." Even the R.S.V., which renders *krisis* as "judgment" in several of the texts cited, renders it "condemnation" in James 5:12. The Christian believer, being in Christ, is not under the condemnation either of the law or of sin, for if he is fully surrendered to God, the righteousness of our blessed Lord covers whatever lack there might be in his life. The child of God, with his title clear to heaven, need entertain no fear of any judgment day.

Abiding in Christ, with Jesus as his Advocate, and utterly given over and dedicated to his Lord, he knows that there is “no condemnation [Greek, *katakrīma*] to them which are in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 8:1).

#### IX. Investigative Judgment as Part of the Program of God

In view of the principles here set forth, it seems to us abundantly clear that the acceptance of Christ at conversion does not seal a person’s destiny. His life record after conversion is also important. A man may go back on his repentance, or by careless inattention let slip the very life he has espoused. Nor can it be said that a man’s record is closed when he comes to the end of his days. He is responsible for his influence during life, and is just as surely responsible for his evil influence after he is dead. To quote the words of the poet, “The evil that men do lives after them,” leaving a trail of sin to be charged to the account. In order to be just, it would seem that God would need to take all these things into account in the judgment.

That there should be a judgment is not strange; the Scriptures reveal it as part of the eternal purpose of God (Acts 17:31), and all His ways are just. Were God alone concerned, there would be no need of an investigation of the life records of men in this judgment, for as our eternal Sovereign God, He is omniscient. He knows the end from the beginning. Even before the creation of the world He knew man would sin and that he would need a Saviour. Moreover, as Sovereign God, He also knows just who will accept and who will reject His “great salvation” (Heb. 2:3).

If God alone were concerned, there would certainly

be no need of records. But that the inhabitants of the whole universe, the good and evil angels, and all who have ever lived on this earth might understand His love and His justice, the life history of every individual who has ever lived on the earth has been recorded, and in the judgment these records will be disclosed —for every man will be judged according to what is revealed in “the books” of record (Dan. 7:10; Rev. 20:12).

God's love and justice have been challenged by Satan and his hosts. The archdeceiver and enemy of all righteousness has made it appear that God is unjust. Therefore in infinite wisdom God has determined to resolve every doubt forever. He does this by making bare before the entire universe the full story of sin, its inception and its history. It will then be apparent why He as the God of love and of justice must ultimately reject the impenitent, who have allied themselves with the forces of rebellion.

Just what these “books” are like, we do not know. That has not been revealed. But the Scriptures make it plain that whatever the nature of these records, they play a vital role in the judgment scene. Moreover, it is only those who have overcome by the blood of the Lamb whose names are retained in the Lamb's book of life.

Ellen G. White, in one of our standard books, has phrased it this way:

There must be an examination of the books of record to determine who, through repentance of sin and faith in Christ, are entitled to the benefits of His atonement. The cleansing of the sanctuary therefore involves a work of investigation—a work of judgment. This work must be performed prior to the coming of

Christ to redeem His people; for when He comes, His reward is with Him to give to every man according to his works.—*The Great Controversy*, p. 422.

It is our understanding that Christ, as High Priest, concludes His intercessory ministry in heaven in a work of judgment. He begins His great work of judgment in the *investigative* phase. At the conclusion of the investigation, the *sentence* of judgment is pronounced. Then as judge Christ descends to *execute*, or carry into effect, that sentence. For sublime grandeur, nothing in the prophetic word can compare with the description of our Lord as He descends the skies, not as a priest, but as King of kings and Lord of lords. And with Him are all the angels of heaven. He commands the dead, and that great unnumbered host of those that are asleep in Christ spring forth into immortality. At the same time those among the living who are truly God's children are caught up together with the redeemed of all ages to meet their Saviour in the air, and to be forever with the Lord.

When God's final sentence of judgment is consummated, the redeemed will be singing the song of Moses and the Lamb, saying, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only art holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest" (Rev. 15:3, 4).

## PART TWO

### The Investigative Judgment in Prophecy, Type, and Bible Principle

As we have suggested in Part One, Seventh-day Adventists believe that at the second coming of Christ the eternal destiny of all men will have been irrevocably fixed by the decisions of a court of judgment. Such a judgment obviously would take place while men are still living on the earth. Men might be quite unaware of what is going on in heaven. It is hardly to be supposed that God would fail to warn men of such an impending judgment and its results. Seventh-day Adventists believe prophecy *does* foretell such a judgment, and indeed points out the very time at which it was to begin. In addition, prophecy foretells a worldwide message to be preached to every nation on earth, warning that this judgment has come.

#### I. The Prophecies of the Judgment

1. COURT CONVENES IN HEAVEN.—A work of judgment is graphically described by the prophet Daniel: "I beheld till the thrones were cast down [“were placed,” R.S.V.], and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands min-

istered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set [“the court sat in judgment,” R.S.V.], and the books were opened. . . . I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away” (Dan. 7: 9-14).

This scene presented to the prophet is part of a larger vision dealing with four beasts. These are interpreted by an angel to represent four consecutive kingdoms, or dominions, that were to rule the earth until the God of heaven sets up a kingdom, peopled exclusively with His saints. “These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth. But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom” (verses 17, 18). Since these four world kingdoms parallel the vision of Daniel 2, where the first kingdom is said to be Babylon, this vision of Daniel 7 must reach from the time of the prophet to the second coming of Christ, at which time the everlasting kingdom of righteousness will be set up. This is important to observe, for the judgment pictured in verses 9-14 takes place before the end of time. Some of its decisions regarding the beast are executed while world affairs are in progress, and the taking away of the dominion of the beast under the control of the little horn is a progressive work that continues “unto the end” (verse 26).

Another statement in the prophecy helps to place

the judgment in its proper perspective. One of the acts of judgment is to give to the "Son of man" "dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him" (verses 13, 14). This must take place before the second coming of Christ, for when He comes to this earth for His saints, He comes crowned as King (Rev. 14:14; 19:14-16), in all the glory of His Father and the holy angels, and according to the Bible picture of the scene, in the book of Revelation, no rebellious sinner will then dare challenge His dominion, but will flee in terror from His face (Rev. 6:15, 16).

We agree with T. Robinson ("Daniel," *The Preacher's Homiletic Commentary*), that the judgment here predicted precedes the second coming of Christ:

We have before us a passage of overwhelming grandeur and sublimity; the description of a scene of awful solemnity. The passage exhibits the judgment-seat of God, with myriads of attendant angels, and the infliction of pronounced doom on a large portion of the human race. The judgment is not indeed, like that in Rev. xx., the general judgment. . . . It is rather the judgment on the fourth beast, or Roman Empire, with its ten horns or kingdoms, and more especially the "Little Horn," whose pride, persecution, and blasphemy are the special occasion of it. . . .

**The time of the judgment.** As already observed, this is not the general judgment at the termination of Christ's reign on earth, or, as the phrase is commonly understood, the end of the world. It appears rather to be an invisible judgment carried on within the veil and revealed by its effects and the execution of its sentence. As occasioned by the "great words" of the Little Horn, and followed by the taking away of his dominion, it might seem to have already sat. As, however, the sentence is not yet by any means fully executed, it may be sitting now.—Pages 136, 139.

The prophecy of Daniel 7 contains another clue as to the time of the judgment pictured in vision. In har-

mony with a long-held Protestant position, Seventh-day Adventists believe that the little horn of verses 8, 24, and 25 is a symbol of the Papacy, which has spoken "great words against the most High," and has worn out "the saints of the most High," and has thought "to change times and laws" (verse 25). See Question 28, p. 334.) The little horn was to be given power over the saints for "a time and times and the dividing of time" (verse 25). This period of domination has long been interpreted to be 1260 years, and has been placed from 538 to 1798, the terminal point being marked by the capture of the pope by the French general Berthier. It was just at this point in the explanation that the angel said, "But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion" (verse 26). Apparently the judgment is to sit while the dominion of the little horn is being taken away.

2. THE HOUR OF GOD'S JUDGMENT.—In the book of Revelation is found a New Testament clue to the time of the investigative judgment. "I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters" (Rev. 14:6, 7). These two verses are part of a vision presented to the apostle John, in which he sees three angels with consecutive messages for men.

These messages, we believe, are to be proclaimed by human messengers under God's direction to warn the

world of final cataclysmic events and to prepare men to meet Christ in glory. The three angels' messages immediately precede the second coming, as described in verse 14 of the same chapter.

Again we have the description of a judgment taking place before the second coming of Christ. But there is another interesting feature here also. This judgment is described in the phrase "the *hour* of his [God's] judgment." In several texts in the New Testament we find the expression "the *day* of judgment" (Matt. 12:36; 2 Peter 2:9; 3:7; 1 John 4:17), nearly always with the implication that it is the time of punishment for sin. The apostle Peter equates "the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men" (2 Peter 3:7) with "the day of the Lord . . . in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up" (verse 10). But in our understanding the "hour of . . . judgment" is different. Here is a message stating that "the hour of his judgment is come," and it is being proclaimed while the nations and kindreds are here on earth to receive it. There are two other messages to follow, calling men to abandon their connection with apostasy, symbolized by Babylon, and warning them against receiving a mark of allegiance to a God-opposing power symbolized by a beast. To us it seems incontrovertible that the judgment to take place during this "hour" is conducted *before* Christ comes in glory, and while men are still on earth.

A judgment to take place before the second advent, and which is to decide the eternal destiny of every

human being, should be of supreme concern to all mankind. If there is anything men can do to influence the decisions of that judgment, certainly each person would like to know when the judgment is to sit and how he can relate himself to it in order to secure a favorable decision in his own case. Seventh-day Adventists believe that the time of the judgment is foretold in prophecy, and that men may be forewarned. We will discuss the nature of the investigative judgment after dealing with the time prophecy that fixes the date of this important event.

3. THE TIME OF THE JUDGMENT.—The prophecy in the Bible that reveals the time for the judgment is found in Daniel 8:14: "He said unto me, Unto two thousand and three hundred days; then shall the sanctuary be cleansed." The relation of the cleansing of the sanctuary to the investigative judgment will be discussed in the next section. Here we will deal only with the time feature of the prophecy. In Questions 23 and 24 we have dealt at length with the various exegetical and interpretative problems encountered in Daniel 8 and 9. A short summary must suffice for our purposes here.

The 2300-day period of Daniel 8:14, is, we believe, to be interpreted on the Bible principle that a "day" in prophecy represents a year of literal time—in other words, that the 2300 days are symbolic time. The Biblical justification for this procedure is found in Ezekiel 4:6 and Numbers 14:34. The 2300 days to the cleansing of the sanctuary, interpreted as years, reach from some ancient date to very modern times. In Question 24 we have shown that the only satisfactory Bible basis

yet proposed for computing this prophecy is to start the 2300 year-days from the same date as the seventy weeks of years mentioned in Daniel 9. In that discussion we have shown that the prophetic specifications are met exactly when both periods are started with the decree issued in the seventh year of Artaxerxes Longimanus and put into effect by Ezra in the year 457 B.C. Twenty-three hundred years from that date reaches to the year A.D. 1844.

Seventh-day Adventists believe, therefore, that some important event in God's plans was scheduled to start in the year 1844—in the symbolic language of the prophecy, "the sanctuary [shall] be cleansed." But how, it is proper to ask, does the cleansing of the sanctuary denote that an investigative judgment is to be carried on in heaven? The answer lies in part in an understanding of the typology of the ancient Jewish sanctuary.

## II. Investigative Judgment in Type and Symbol

The sanctuary in the wilderness and the Temple of later days were vivid object lessons in God's great plan of redemption for the human race. Note the following features:

1. There were two phases of ministry: (a) that performed in the outer court and in the holy place *every day of the year* (Heb. 9:6), and (b) that performed in the most holy place *once each year* (verse 7).

2. The work carried forward daily in the outer court, and in the holy place, was in a particular sense the *work of reconciliation* for men. In contrast, that performed yearly in the most holy place was largely a

*work of judgment.* Every day of the year (including the Day of Atonement) sins were forgiven. But the Day of Atonement was a special day when the confessed sins were also blotted out. On this day God gave to Israel a graphic illustration, we believe, of His purpose to eliminate sin forever from His universe.

3. There were three special groups of sacrificial offerings in the typical service: (a) the morning and evening sacrifices (Hebrew, the *tamid*—"the continual"), (b) the sinner's individual offerings, and (c) the special offerings of the Day of Atonement.

4. Every day of the year, morning and evening sacrifices were offered on behalf of the people. Atonement was thus provided for all men, irrespective of their attitude toward this provision. Wherever the people lived, they could lift their hearts to God, turn their faces toward Jerusalem, confess their sins, and avail themselves of the gracious provisions of the atonement (1 Kings 8:30). Also, the individual sinner brought his own sacrifice as opportunity afforded. These personal sacrifices were expressions of his faith and of his acceptance of the divine provisions made for his salvation from sin.

5. The special sacrifices on the Day of Atonement, already noted as a day of judgment, were of a different nature. First, there were sacrifices offered by the high priest for himself and his house. But the main sacrificial offering on that day was termed "the Lord's goat." Two goats were used, but one (for Azazel) was not a sacrifice. Its blood was not shed. *Only the blood of the "Lord's goat" provided the cleansing and atoning blood.*

6. The service on that day was particularly important: (a) Salvation for the people was, as usual, provided by the morning and evening sacrifices; but *there were no individual offerings* on that day; (b) the blood of the Lord's goat was for the people (Heb. 7:27); it was to make an atonement for them (Lev. 16:30); it was "for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year" (verse 34); it was "for all the people of the congregation" (verse 33); (c) when this was done, the same atoning blood, in the type, cleansed the most holy place, the altars, the holy place itself, and the entire tabernacle; (d) when the atoning work for the people and for the sanctuary was completed, and all that were willing to be reconciled were reconciled, *then*, we would emphasize, *and not until then*, did the second goat (for Azazel) enter the picture. We read: "And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat" (Lev. 16:20). (On the significance of the expression, "for Azazel," see Question 34.) In the act now performed by the high priest, the people, we repeat, were given an object lesson of what God plans to do in the last days. The sins were placed upon the head of the live goat, and he was sent into the wilderness.

7. A careful study of all the sacrifices of the sanctuary service makes it evident that there was a definite underlying principle in all these types—that sin was transferred from the guilty sinner both to the sacrificial victim and to the priest himself. The offerer placed his hand on the head of the victim, symbolically confessing his sin and placing it upon the animal substitute that

was to die in his stead. When the blood was sprinkled, the sin was recorded in the sanctuary. Through the prophet, God said, "The sin of Judah . . . is graven . . . upon the horns of your altars" (Jer. 17:1). When the priest ate of the flesh of the victim, he also bore the sin (Lev. 10:17). The individual sinner was forgiven and thus freed from his sin, but in the bloodstains of the sanctuary he could perceive in type a record of the misdeeds that he would fain see blotted out and removed forever. On the Day of Atonement, when the blood of the goat was sprinkled upon all the furniture of the sanctuary as well as upon the altar of burnt offering, the accumulated record of the sins of the year were removed. The Scripture states that the high priest "shall make an atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins: and so shall he do for the tabernacle of the congregation" (Lev. 16:16). "And he shall go out unto the altar that is before the Lord, and make an atonement for it. . . . And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel" (verses 18, 19). "On that day shall the priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord" (verse 30).

The typical picture seems clear. The sins of the Israelites, recorded in the sanctuary by the shed blood of the sacrificial victims, were removed and totally disposed of on the Day of Atonement. The language used to describe the transaction suggests the expunging of the very record of evil.

8. The Day of Atonement was definitely regarded by the Hebrews as a day of judgment, as seen from the following:

It was supposed that on New Year Day . . . the Divine decrees are written down, and that on the Day of Atonement . . . they are sealed, so that the decade [of days] is known by the name of "Terrible Days," and "the Ten Penitential Days." So awful was the Day of Atonement that we are told in a Jewish book of ritual that the very angels run to and fro in fear and trembling, saying, "Lo, the Day of Judgment has come!"—F. W. FARRAR, *The Early Days of Christianity*, pp. 237, 238.

Even the angels, we are told in the Ritual, are seized with fear and trembling; they hurry to and fro and say, "Behold the day of Judgment has come." The Day of Atonement is the Day of Judgment.—PAUL ISAAC HERSHON, *Treasures of the Talmud* (1882), p. 97.

"God, seated on His throne to judge the world, at the same time Judge, Pleader, Expert, and Witness, openeth the Book of Records. . . . The great trumpet is sounded; a still, small voice is heard; the angels shudder, saying, this is the day of judgment. . . . On New-Year's Day the decree is written; on the Day of Atonement it is sealed who shall live and who are to die."—*The Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 2, p. 286.

### III. The Heavenly Sanctuary and Its Cleansing

The cleansing of the sanctuary prophesied in Daniel 8:14 to take place at the end of 2300 days, or years, as we have shown, could not apply to the ancient Jewish tabernacle, for that sanctuary has been out of existence for nearly two thousand years. The earthly sanctuary and its service, as we have indicated in Questions 31 and 33, was simply a type, or symbol, of the work of Christ in the salvation of men through His death on the cross and His ministry before the Father in their behalf. The book of Hebrews clearly sets forth that Christ is a high priest in a sanctuary in heaven (Heb.

8:2), where He ministers the merits of His sacrifice to repentant sinners and devoted saints (Heb. 9:14, 15). We believe it is the cleansing of this heavenly sanctuary, then, that is to fulfill the prophecy of Daniel 8:14.

But how could the sanctuary in heaven need cleansing? In the type, the sins of the Israelites defiled the sanctuary, and on the Day of Atonement it was cleansed of all these sins. But the Scripture also speaks of the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary: "It was necessary for the copies of the heavenly things to be purified with these rites, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these" (Heb. 9:23, R.S.V.). Here it seems clear from the wording that the expression "the copies of the heavenly things" refers to the sanctuary or Temple in the days of Israel. After stating this, the writer mentions that "the heavenly things themselves" need cleansing "with better sacrifices than these."

This, of course, may be difficult to understand in the light of our concept that everything in heaven must be pure and holy.

Scholars have given much thought to this matter. After reviewing several views put forth by various writers, Dean Henry Alford remarks:

But this does not meet the requirements of the case. There would thus be no cleansing, as far as the relations of God and men are concerned: none, to which the propitiatory effect of blood would in any way apply. We must therefore rest in the plain and literal sense: that *the heaven itself needed, and obtained, purification* by the atoning blood of Christ.—*The Greek Testament*, 1864, p. 179.

As to just how this uncleanness comes about, A. S. Peake, another careful scholar, says:

What is meant by the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary must be determined by its meaning as applied to the earthly. The ritual of the Day of Atonement was designed, not merely to atone for the sins of the people, but *to make atonement for the sanctuary itself*. The sense of this would seem to be that the constant sin of Israel had communicated a certain uncleanness to the sanctuary. Similarly the sin of mankind might be supposed to have cast its shadow even into heaven.—*New-Century Bible*, “Hebrews,” p. 191. (Italics supplied.)

And the well-known Dr. Brooke Foss Westcott adds:

The Blood of Christ by which the New Covenant was inaugurated was available also for the cleansing of the heavenly archetype of the earthly sanctuary....

It may be said that even “heavenly things,” so far as they embody the conditions of man’s future life, contracted by the Fall something which required cleansing.—*The Epistle to the Hebrews* (1903), pp. 271, 272.

In the sanctuary in heaven, the record of sins is the only counterpart of the defilement of the earthly sanctuary. That the sins of men are recorded in heaven, we shall show in the next section. It is the expunging, or blotting out, of these sins from the heavenly records that fulfills the type set forth in the services on the Day of Atonement. In that way the sanctuary in heaven can be cleansed from all defilement. This conclusion does not rest alone on an interpretation of the types. There are many direct and positive statements of Scripture about God’s method of dealing with sin and forgiveness, judgment and rewards and punishments.

#### IV. God’s Method of Dealing With Sin and Sinners

1. GOD KEEPS AN ACCOUNT WITH EVERY MAN.—In the description of the judgment given to Daniel in vision, it is said, “The judgment was set, and the books were opened” (Dan. 7:10). And the apostle John wrote

of the final judgment when evil men and angels receive their punishment, "I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works" (Rev. 20:12). The decisions of the judgment, then, are based on what is written in these books. It is not possible to suppose that the books mentioned are books of law, for John says that what is written in the books is "according to their works." Obviously these are books of record.

Nor is the Bible otherwise silent on what is written down in the heavenly accounts. The Scriptures mention a book of remembrance: "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels" (Mal. 3:16, 17). This book, it would seem, contains the good deeds of God-fearing men. The heavenly records may have been in the psalmist's mind when he wrote: "Thou tellest my wanderings: put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book?" (Ps. 56:8).

But men's evil deeds are also recorded: "God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (Eccl. 12:14). Christ warned His hearers that "every idle word" would come up in the judgment (Matt. 12:36), and that by their words, good or bad, men would be

“justified” or “condemned” (verse 37). Even men’s thoughts and motives are recorded in the books above, for Paul warns that in the judgment the Lord “will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts” (1 Cor. 4:5). Evidently the heavenly recorder has made a complete life history of every individual who has ever lived on earth, omitting nothing that could have any possible bearing on the decision of the Omnipotent Judge.

Another book is named in Revelation 20—the book of life. This book is either mentioned by name or obviously alluded to in several books of the Bible. Moses knew of this special register, for he offered, “Blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written” (Ex. 32:32), as he pleaded with God to forgive the rebellious Israelites. Christ told His disciples, “Rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven” (Luke 10:20). And Paul mentions “my fellowlabourers, whose names are in the book of life” (Phil. 4:3).

The book of life at the very last contains the names of those who will escape the punishment of the lake of fire (Rev. 20:15), and who will have the privilege of entering the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:27). By the time of the final judgment the book of life will contain the names of those only who are selected by the heavenly court to enjoy the rewards of eternal life. But it is clear that these are not the only names that have ever been in the book of life. Moses was willing for his name to be blotted out of the book. And God Himself gave the basis upon which such blotting out would take place: “Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book” (Ex. 32:33). In vision the apostle

John heard it expressed another way: "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels" (Rev. 3:5). Those who gain the victory over sin through the merits of the shed blood of Christ will be retained in the book of life. Conversely, those who do not overcome will be blotted out as sinners against God. King David, identifying his enemies with the enemies of the Lord, said, "Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous" (Ps. 69:28).

It would appear from this that the book of life is the register of those who have professed to be followers of God and have made some start toward the goal of eternal life. The apostle Paul speaks of "the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written ["enrolled," margin and R.S.V.] in heaven" (Heb. 12:23). Speaking after the manner of men, we would say the book of life is the heavenly church register. In this list would be all whom God could conceivably consider as candidates for His eternal kingdom, from Adam down to the very last person on earth who turns in yearning to God, no matter how limited may be his understanding of the glorious gospel evangel.

The blotting of names out of the book of life is, we believe, a work of the investigative judgment. A complete and thorough check of all the candidates for eternal life will need to be completed before Christ comes in the clouds of heaven, for when He appears, the decisions for life or death are already made. The dead in Christ are called to life, and the living followers of

Christ are translated (1 Thess. 4:15-17)—the entire citizenry of the everlasting kingdom. There is no time subsequent to the second advent for such decisions.

2. THE BLOTTING OUT OF SIN.—But not only will names be blotted out of the book of life. The Bible also speaks of the blotting out of sin. David prayed, “According unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions” (Ps. 51:1), and, “Blot out all mine iniquities” (verse 9). And Nehemiah prayed concerning the enemies of God and His people, “Cover not their iniquity, and let not their sin be blotted out from before thee” (Neh. 4:5). The apostle Peter looked forward to the time when, because of men’s repentance, their “sins may be blotted out” (Acts 3:19).

In Scripture, a difference is to be noted between the *forgiveness* of sin and the *blotting out* of sin. The forgiveness of our sins is very real, and is something that can be known and experienced by living faith in our Lord. In the divine act of forgiveness our sins are removed from us, and we are freed, delivered, saved. But the final destruction of sin awaits the day of God’s reckoning, when sin will be blotted out forever from the universe of God.

Scripture clearly illustrates the difference between forgiveness and the blotting out of sin. Take, for example, Matthew 18:23-35. Here reference is made to a servant who owed his king ten thousand talents. Having nothing wherewith to pay, he begs for mercy, the king forgives him the debt, and he goes off greatly relieved. However, he finds a fellow servant who owes him a mere hundred pence. This second man likewise has nothing with which to pay, and begs for mercy and

for time to pay what is owed. But although the first servant has been forgiven, he now acts in unkindly and brutal fashion toward his fellow servant, shows him no mercy, and casts him into prison. When the king hears this, he is wroth, and casts the servant *whom he has forgiven* into prison till he shall pay all his debt.

Here is a case where forgiveness granted was withdrawn. Jesus then impresses the lesson: "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses" (verse 35). We concur, in principle, with the conclusions of these two Biblical scholars:

R. Tuck (*The Pulpit Commentary*, on Matt. 18:35) says:

Christ's teaching on this point has even a severe side—even his forgiveness may be revoked; if he finds, by our behaviour after forgiveness, that we were morally unfitted to receive it.—Page 242.

And B. C. Coffin adds in the same book:

His cruelty cancelled the forgiveness which had been granted him. His last state was worse than the first. Those who, having been once enlightened, fall away from grace are in awful danger. "It had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them."—Page 223.

Albert Plummer (*Commentary on Matthew*, Matt. 18:30, 35) also declares:

The unforgiving spirit is sure to provoke the anger of God; so much so, that His free forgiveness to sinners ceases to flow to them. . . . It revives the guilt of their otherwise forgiven sins.

We have already referred to the description in the book of Ezekiel (Eze. 18:20-24) of God's dealings with saints and sinners who change their course of action.

There the apostate has his forgiveness canceled, just as the man in Christ's parable was compelled to assume again the responsibility for his huge debt. The actual blotting out of sin, therefore, could not take place the moment when a sin is forgiven, because subsequent deeds and attitudes may affect the final decision. Instead, the sin remains on the record until the life is complete—in fact, the Scriptures indicate it remains until the judgment.

The Bible pictures Christ as our Advocate. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" (1 John 2:1). But Christ cannot plead our cases unless we commit them to Him. He does not represent us against our will, nor does He force men into heaven contrary to their own decision. And how do we ask Him? The Scripture says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). God can forgive because Christ has paid the penalty. Christ is now the sinner's representative, and pleads the merits of His own atoning sacrifice in the sinner's behalf.

If every detail of a man's life is recorded in heaven, then his confessions are recorded there too, and of course the fact that Christ has forgiven his sins. The apostle Paul's comment may well apply here: "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment" (1 Tim. 5:24). The secret things we have refused to confess will be brought to light after the judgment opens (Eccl. 12:14; 1 Cor. 4:5).

When the name of a true child of God comes up in the judgment, the record will reveal that every sin has

been confessed—and has been forgiven through the blood of Christ. The promise is: “He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels” (Rev. 3:5). Christ sets forth the principle: “Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven” (Matt. 10:32, 33). To us, it seems clear that we must continue our allegiance throughout life if we expect Christ to represent us in the judgment.

When Christ takes a case in the heavenly court, there is not the slightest possibility of His losing, for He knows all the facts, and He is able to apply the remedy. When He confesses before God and the holy angels that the repentant sinner is clothed in the robe of His own spotless character (this is the white robe that will be given him), no one in the universe can deny to that saved man an entrance into the eternal kingdom of righteousness. Then, of course, is the time for his sins to be blotted out forever, for Christ has claimed him for His own. When every case is decided, the decree can issue forth from the throne: “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still” (Rev. 22:11).

The Bible uses several figures to express the complete obliteration of the sins of God’s people. The prophet Micah says, “Thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea” (Micah 7:19). David pictures it:

"As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us" (Ps. 103:12). Through the prophet Jeremiah God promised, "I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jer. 31:34). And through Isaiah God proclaimed, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins" (Isa. 43:25). It would seem that God wants to clear the universe of every reminder of sin, so that the sad and painful experiences of this life "shall not be remembered, nor come into mind" (Isa. 65:17). The blotting out of the whole tragic record of sins is as definitely a part of God's plan as is forgiveness.

The following description of the investigative judgment, penned by Ellen G. White, is, we believe, based entirely upon the revealed truths of God's Word as we have set them forth in the preceding pages:

As the books of record are opened in the judgment, the lives of all who have believed on Jesus come in review before God. Beginning with those who first lived upon the earth, our Advocate presents the cases of each successive generation, and closes with the living. Every name is mentioned, every case closely investigated. Names are accepted, names rejected. When any have sins remaining upon the books of record, unrepented of and unforgiven, their names will be blotted out of the book of life, and the record of their good deeds will be erased from the book of God's remembrance. . . . All who have truly repented of sin, and by faith claimed the blood of Christ as their atoning sacrifice, have had pardon entered against their names in the books of heaven; as they have become partakers of the righteousness of Christ, and their characters are found to be in harmony with the law of God, their sins will be blotted out, and they themselves will be accounted worthy of eternal life.—*The Great Controversy*, p. 483.

### 3. THE FINAL END OF SIN AND SINNERS.—Seventh-

day Adventists believe that from 1844 onward, to the second coming of Christ, is the period of the investigative judgment. This period we speak of as the antitypical Day of Atonement. But during this time, as indicated in the typical service, the work of salvation goes forward continually for all mankind, thus fulfilling the type. However, just before our Lord comes in all His glory, mercy ceases and probation ends, as is indicated in Revelation 22:11, 12.

When the high priest in the typical service had concluded his work in the earthly sanctuary on the Day of the Atonement, he came to the door of the sanctuary. Then the final act with the second goat, Azazel, took place. In like manner, when our Lord completes His ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, He, too, will come forth. When He does this, the day of salvation will have closed forever. Every soul will have thus made his decision for or against the divine Son of God. Then upon Satan, the instigator of sin, is rolled back his responsibility for having initiated and introduced iniquity into the universe. *But he in no sense vicariously atones for the sins of God's people.* All this Christ fully bore, and vicariously atoned for, on Calvary's cross.

Having finished His ministry as high priest, our Saviour then returns to the earth in glory, and it is *then* that Satan is cast into the bottomless pit, where he and his confederates in rebellion remain for the millennial thousand years of Revelation 20:1. This is his prison house, with devastation all around him. Then at the end of the thousand years the wicked dead are raised to life, and together with the devil and his angels, are cast into the lake of fire. This will be their

reward—the second, or eternal, death (Rev. 20:13-15). (See Question 42.)

In Malachi 4:1 we read: “The day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch.”

Looking forward to that day when every trace of sin will be obliterated, King David said, “The wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away” (Ps. 37:20). “For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently *consider his place, and it shall not be.* But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace” (verses 10, 11). “For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea” (Hab. 2:14). So we say, “Blessed be his glorious name for ever: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory; Amen, and Amen” (Ps. 72:19).



## **VIII. Questions on the Second Advent and the Millennium**



# The Second Coming of Christ

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## QUESTION 37

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*What is the teaching of Adventists regarding the second coming of our Lord? We are given to understand that you do not accept the positions held by many Christians today relative to the secret rapture, the tribulation, and anti-christ. Why do you not accept these views?*

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As our denominational name indicates, the second coming of Christ is one of the cardinal doctrines of the Adventist faith. We give it such prominence in our beliefs because it occupies a pivotal place in Holy Scripture, not only in the New Testament, but also in the Old. As far back as the time of Enoch, it was prophesied, "The Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints" (Jude 14). And Job said, "I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth" (Job 19:25); while David declared, "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence" (Ps. 50:3). Numerous other prophets wrote in similar vein.

### I. Various Terms Used to Depict Advent

In the constantly recurring predictions of the glorious second advent of our Lord, a number of Greek words are used, words having distinct and unique shades

of meaning. We will list the most prominent, giving an example of each use. Here are ten leading Greek terms employed:

*Parousia*—“The *coming* of the Lord draweth nigh” (James 5:8).

*Erchomai*—“Occupy till I *come*” (Luke 19:13).

*Apokaluptō*—“When the Lord Jesus shall be *revealed*” (2 Thess. 1:7).

*Epiphaneia*—“The *appearing* of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Tim. 6:14).

*Phaneroō*—“When the chief Shepherd shall *appear*” (1 Peter 5:4).

*Prosōpon*—“From the *presence* of the Lord” (2 Thess. 1:9).

*Analuō*—“He will *return* from the wedding” (Luke 12:36).

*Hupostrephō*—“To receive . . . a kingdom, and to *return*” (Luke 19:12).

*Ephistēmi*—“That day *come upon* you unawares” (Luke 21:34).

*Hēkō*—“Hold fast till I *come*” (Rev. 2:25).

The meaning of these ten Greek terms is highly significant. Properly understood, they enable us to glimpse at least something of the nature of the glorious appearing of our blessed Lord. *Erchomai*, for example, indicates the *act* of coming, but not necessarily of arrival. *Hēkō* goes a step further, and not only means coming, but stresses *arrival* as well. *Parousia* goes further still, for it involves not only coming and arrival, but the actual *personal presence* of the person who has arrived. Again, *analuō* indicates a *departure* in order to

*return*, while *hupostrephō* has the idea of returning from a journey.

Further, *apokaluptō* stresses appearing, with the idea of revelation. *Prosōpon* indicates the actual presence of the one coming, and that all are before his face. *Epiphaneia* emphasizes the glory that will attend the Saviour when He comes. *Phaneroō* involves not only appearing but the further thought that the person appearing will be seen in his true character. The other word, *ephistēmi*, stresses the thought not only of being near but particularly of the suddenness of the coming of the Lord.

While the foregoing meanings of the Greek words are given in their renderings into English, these meanings are not always sharp and distinct. There is often an overlapping in the shades of meaning.

## II. Adventist Understanding of the Second Advent

From these preliminary considerations, we feel that sound and reasonable conclusions may be drawn as to the teaching of the Word concerning the second advent. The Bible basis for our belief may be stated as follows:

1. **JESUS WILL ASSUREDLY COME THE SECOND TIME.** —Jesus Himself promised to come again. “I will come again,” He assured His disciples (John 14:3). And Paul the apostle declared that He would “appear the second time” (Heb. 9:28). The Saviour adds the further thought, “I will come again, and receive you unto myself” (John 14:3). There is significance to these last-mentioned words, for it is at the second advent

that the resurrection of the saints takes place (1 Thess. 4:16).

And this is of such vital necessity that the same apostle declares, "If Christ be not risen" (1 Cor. 15:14) then "the dead rise not" (verse 16); and if this be so, "then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished" (verse 18). The Greek word here used for "perished" is *apollumi*, which means "destroyed," "perished," "lost." It is the term used in Luke 13:3, which reads, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise *perish*"; also in John 17:12, "None of them is *lost*, but the son of perdition."

There is good reason, we therefore believe, for calling the advent of Jesus the "blessed hope" (Titus 2:13). In a very real sense it is the supreme hope of the church, for it is at the return of our Lord that the sleeping saints are called forth to immortality. It is then that this "mortal shall . . . put on immortality" (1 Cor. 15:54). And it is then that "the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible" (verse 52).

Further, those who are translated at the second advent (1 Thess. 4:15) will meet those raised from the dead, and together they meet their Lord in the air (verse 17), and so shall they "ever be with the Lord." What consolation to those who have laid their loved ones to rest! This is evidently what the apostle had in mind when he wrote, "Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (verse 18).

2. SECOND ADVENT WILL BE VISIBLE, AUDIBLE, AND PERSONAL.—*a. His coming will be visible.* The revelator makes this clear when he states, "Behold, he cometh

with clouds; and *every eye* shall see him" (Rev. 1:7). This climactic event will certainly be visible to the saints of God. They have patiently waited for Him (1 Cor. 1:7), and it is "unto them that *look* for him" that He appears "without sin unto salvation" (Heb. 9:28).

But the unrepentant hosts will also see Him as He comes in glory. We read that then "all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory" (Matt. 24:30; see also Mark 13:26; Luke 21:27).

*b. His coming will be audible.* The Bible writers, in describing the return of Christ, many times refer to the accompanying sound of a trumpet: "the last trump" (1 Cor. 15:52); "a shout," "the voice," "the trump of God" (1 Thess. 4:16); "a great sound of a trumpet" (Matt. 24:31). We do not understand this to be figurative language, but a plain statement of what will take place.

*c. His coming will be personal.* The coming of Jesus is not at death, or in some great catastrophe—such as the destruction of Jerusalem. The actual, personal presence of our Saviour Jesus Christ is called for. At the ascension the angels declared to the astonished disciples, "This same Jesus . . . shall so come in like manner" (Acts 1:11). The word "same" is not in the Greek text, but "this" is. The Greek word is *houtōs*, a demonstrative word here used to stress the fact that He who returns will be the actual Jesus who ascended, and not another. This might well be rendered, "But Jesus Himself shall come." A. T. Robertson (in his *Word Pictures*), commenting on Acts 1:11, remarks:

*So in like manner (houtōs hon tropon).* Same idea twice. . . . The fact of His second coming and the manner of it is also described by this emphatic repetition.

The word *parousia*, so frequently used of the coming of Christ, means the actual personal presence of the Saviour. It is the same word used in describing the “coming” of Titus (2 Cor. 7:6). (See more on this point under Section 4.)

**3. VARIOUS DESCRIPTIVE WORDS REFER TO BUT ONE ADVENT.**—It is to be particularly observed that there is but *one* second coming of Christ set forth in Scripture. This is specifically referred to as His *appearing* (Titus 2:13), *coming* (James 5:8), *return* (Luke 19:12), *presence* (2 Thess. 1:9), coming the *second time* (Heb. 9:28), and *coming again* (John 14:3). Jesus said He would “come again” (John 14:3); and in the parable would “return” from His journey (Luke 19:12). He referred repeatedly to His “coming” with no indication whatever of a two-stage advent or of a preliminary coming, secret or otherwise, for the “rapture” of the saints. Scripture explicitly states that Christ will come “the second time” to save those who are looking for Him (Heb. 9:28); obviously “we which are alive and remain” (1 Thess. 4:17) to look for Him are to be saved at the time of the resurrection and translation of the saints, that is, the time of the so-called rapture. We can find no scripture that separates what has been termed the “rapture” from the second coming.

In the face of all the references to “the” coming, appearing, or return of the Lord, and in the absence of any statement of two distinct events, certainly the burden of proof rests on those who would divide these

various references to the coming into two phases separated by the period of the antichrist. And the advocate of the "pretribulationist" view does not have clear Scripture evidence for a preliminary coming to gather the saints *before* the last-day tribulation and a coming with the saints *after* the tribulation in glory and flaming vengeance on the antichrist and the wicked. Not only is there no hint of two such different comings, but there is specific scriptural evidence to the contrary.

4. "PAROUSIA" CALLS FOR CHRIST'S ACTUAL PERSONAL APPEARANCE.—This word *parousia* has a distinct meaning, and can meet its fulfillment only in the actual coming and visible presence of the individual involved. This can be seen in the use of *parousia* in the New Testament, other than in reference to the second coming. Thus it is used of the coming of Titus (2 Cor. 7:6); the coming of Stephanas (1 Cor. 16:17); and the coming of Paul (Phil. 1:26).

An illustration is seen in 2 Corinthians 10:10, where we read concerning the "bodily presence" (*parousia*) of Paul the apostle. There is no occasion for mistaking the meaning of this word. It is clear, definite, and conclusive. Deissmann (*Light From the Ancient East*, pp. 272, 382) shows that *parousia* ("presence," "coming") was the technical term for the personal arrival of a potentate or his representative.

The Scriptures clearly teach (1 Cor. 15:23) that "they that are Christ's" are to be resurrected "at his coming" (the word here used is *parousia*). Elsewhere the *parousia* of the Son of man is described by a very visible symbol, the lightning shining across the whole sky (Matt. 24:27). There is nothing secret about that

kind of *parousia*. (The argument for a secret coming of Christ based on this Greek word has been discredited even by some pretribulationist writers.) But the evidence does not rest on the mere choice of words.

5. NO PLACE FOR "SECRET" RAPTURE AS SEPARATE PHASE OF ADVENT.—When Jesus returns He does not come alone. Celestial beings constitute the triumphal train that returns with Him. Jesus said, "The Son of man shall come . . . with his angels" (Matt. 16:27). Mark refers to them as "holy angels" (Mark 8:38); Paul, as "his mighty angels" (2 Thess. 1:7); and Matthew quotes our Lord's own words, saying "*all* the holy angels" will accompany His return (Matt. 25:31). What a galaxy of celestial glory, not merely of the angel hosts, but of Christ Himself coming in "his own glory" and in "his Father's" (Luke 9:26). Who can picture the scene! With ten thousands of ten thousands and "thousands of thousands" (Rev. 5:11), of these messengers of glory, what a pageant of unparalleled majesty! What a revelation of the effulgent glory of the Eternal!

There is a striking similarity between the events as described in different parallel accounts of the second coming, particularly in relation to the resurrection of the dead and the translation of the living righteous. Paul says, "The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God" (1 Thess. 4:16), and will catch up His own into the air to meet Him. Obviously, it is this gathering up of the saints from the earth that is described in similar terms by Jesus Himself: "They shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of

heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (Matt. 24:30, 31). And notice that it is the sounding of "the trumpet" that calls forth "the dead" (1 Cor. 15:52) when "they that are Christ's" are "made alive" "at his coming" (verses 22, 23). This selection of the righteous from among the vast multitudes of earth is on an individual basis. Christ Himself described this dividing of earth's inhabitants into two distinct classes by the simple declaration, "One shall be taken, and the other left" (Matt. 24:40).

In the light of these considerations, we find no place for a secret rapture, as held by some.

6. THE ADVENT AND THE FINAL TRIBULATION.—The "gathering" of the church to Christ in relation to the time of the antichrist and the tribulation is discussed in literal and explicit language in Paul's second letter to the Thessalonians, which was written to correct the misunderstanding of what he had said in his first letter about the coming of Jesus to raise the dead and translate the living righteous. In his second epistle he tells the Thessalonian Christians that God will compensate their persecutors with tribulation, and the victims of persecution with rest, "when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel" (2 Thess. 1:7, 8). Again we find the two classes: The church finds rest *at the time when* Christ comes with blazing vengeance on His (and her) enemies. Further, Paul instructed

them in regard to "the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" and "our gathering together unto him" (2 Thess. 2:1; not *by*, or in the name of, the coming and the gathering, but *concerning* it, as the R.S.V. correctly renders *huper*). What else could he have meant by "our gathering together unto him" but the same gathering of the saints that he had described in his former letter and that they had evidently misunderstood—the coming when "we . . . shall be caught up" to Christ, that is, the "rapture" of 1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17? In regard to this matter he beseeches his readers not to be "shaken in mind, or be troubled" about the imminence of the day of Christ, "for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition" (2 Thess. 2:1-3). Paul, then, is telling the Thessalonian Christians that the day of Christ's coming to gather the saints\*—the coming about which they were worried because they had misunderstood Paul—was not to come until *after* the revealing of the man of sin. This much is clear here, but Paul goes on.

This man of sin, further, is to sit "in the temple of God" and claim worship as God—the same power we believe that is to wear out the saints and bring the great tribulation of 1260 days—and he is to be destroyed "with the brightness of his coming" (verses 4, 8). It is obvious that, whatever "he who now letteth" might be, the taking away that will permit the revealing of anti-

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\*To hold that "that day," "the day of Christ," refers to the visible coming after the revealing of antichrist, while the "coming" and "gathering" of the church is the "rapture," preceding the revealing of antichrist, is to make Paul say: "Now I beseech you, in regard to event A, not to be troubled about event B, which will come seven years later." That would reduce his explanation to nonsense.

christ cannot be equated with the gathering of Christ's church to Himself, which Paul here refers to as coming *after* the "falling away" and the revealing of the man of sin. And it is equally obvious that antichrist must precede, not follow, the gathering of the saints to Christ at His coming. To state it in another way: If the coming of Christ that destroys the antichrist follows the revealing of the man of sin, and if the gathering of the Christian saints at His coming also follows the revealing of the man of sin, then there is no conceivable reason, in the absence of an explicit statement of Scripture, why these are not the same coming.

This agrees with Paul's statement that the coming to bring rest to the church is the coming to bring vengeance to the enemies of God; with John's description of the coming of the King that includes the judgments on the beast, the false prophet, and the dragon, and the first resurrection as well; and with Jesus' statement that His coming with trumpet blast to gather His elect follows the tribulation. And all the passages harmonize with Jesus' repeated references to His coming (always in the singular).

Therefore Seventh-day Adventists believe on the evidence of Scripture that there will be one visible, personal, glorious second coming of Christ.

**7. PROPHECIES CONCERNING ANTICHRIST FULFILLED BEFORE ADVENT.**—Adventists, in common with virtually all early Protestant Reformers, recognize the papal power as the great Antichrist of the centuries, because it meets the scriptural specifications of the "little horn" of Daniel 7 and the "beast" of Revelation 13.

Those who take either the preterist or the futurist

position are unable to recognize the actual Antichrist as he carries on his work. When no one is on the alert to his nefarious schemes, he will seek to deceive the whole world; so much so, that ultimately men will declare, "Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?" and "all the world" will wonder "after the beast" (Rev. 13:4, 3).

The work of Antichrist will be brought to an end by the second advent of our Lord. We read in 2 Thessalonians 2:3 of one who is called the "man of sin." We read of his blasphemous claims in verse 4, of his signs and lying wonders in verse 9. But God's Word declares unmistakably that he will be consumed by "the brightness of his [Christ's] coming" (2 Thess. 2:8). Though all the organizations of apostasy, with all their wicked works, should combine, their activities will come to an end at the time our Lord returns from heaven (Rev. 19:19, 20).

8. SECOND ADVENT MARKS BEGINNING OF MILLENNIAL PERIOD.—The millennial period is mentioned definitely in Revelation 20 under the expression "thousand years." Verses 4-6 speak of the *first* resurrection. "They came to life again, and reigned with Christ a thousand years" (Rev. 20:4, R.S.V.). Those having part in it are called "blessed and holy." Further, "they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and they shall reign with him a thousand years." The resurrection of the saints, taught in 1 Corinthians 15 and 1 Thessalonians 4, takes place at the coming of our Lord. And inasmuch as those thus raised reign "with Christ a thousand years," it is clear that this resurrection marks the beginning of the millennial period. Seeing that the rest of the dead (the

wicked) "did not come to life again until the thousand years were ended" (Rev. 20:4, R.S.V.), it likewise seems clear that this second resurrection marks the close of the millennial period. (For further discussion of the millennium, see Questions 38, 39).

9. NEW TESTAMENT EXPRESSIONS ADVANCED BY RAPTURISTS.—Among these are to be noted (a) "The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night" (1 Thess. 5:2) and (b) "The one shall be taken, and the other left" (Matt. 24:40). The likening of the coming of Christ to a thief in the night, must, it seems to us, be understood as having some limitations. One would surely not wish to push the illustration to the extreme. We would hardly think of the Saviour's coming like a thief who prowls around, working in the dark, afraid of being discovered. That could never be a likeness of our Redeemer.

The context of 1 Thessalonians 5:2 clearly indicates what the apostle meant by describing the second coming of Christ as a thief. He is talking about the unexpectedness of Christ's coming. No one expects a thief; therefore he is able to do his nefarious work undetected. The apostle describes the heedless at that day as expecting peace and safety when sudden destruction is in immediate prospect (verse 3). But they are not expecting it. He cautions the faithful not to fall asleep, lest the second advent overtake *them* as a thief (verses 4, 5). He urges them to "watch and be sober" (verse 6) in expectation of the second coming of Christ.

The idea, therefore, is of *unexpectedness* rather than of *secrecy*. Of course, the advent of Jesus will catch

some professing Christians asleep, but that will be their own fault, and not part of God's plan. They should be alert and watching for His appearing. But even those who are awake, unless they are fully surrendered to God, will be caught unawares. The coming of the Lord will also be *unexpected* for them. In other words, they are not actually looking for Him to return; they are not waiting for Him. Hence, Christ's coming will, to them, be as a thief in the night.

As to the other passage—"The one shall be taken, and the other left"—there are two schools of interpretation among commentators. Some feel that those "taken" are taken in destruction; others, that they are taken to be with the Lord. But whatever the correct interpretation, one point stands out clearly: *No concept of secrecy* is involved in the words used. It is the *fact* of being "taken" or of being "left" that is stressed. There is no indication in the words themselves as to just *how* the one is taken and the other left.

The passage indicates clearly that this will be a day of separation. To introduce the idea of secrecy into the text is, we believe, wholly unwarranted. Nowhere in the Bible is there any indication that when the one is taken and the other left, certain persons will awaken the next morning to find loved ones "missing." The thief-in-the-night illustration was obviously given by our Lord to indicate the suddenness of His appearing and the danger that faces not only the world but even the church of being unprepared and so being taken unawares.

Advocates of the "rapture" theory also advance the case of Enoch in support of their concept. As to Enoch,

the Scripture declares, "By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him" (Heb. 11:5). It is maintained that the expression he "was not found" indicates that a search was made, and so implies secrecy in his being translated. But in this connection it must be remembered that the term "ascension" itself surely does not connote secrecy. Elijah also was translated, but in full view of Elisha, and with chariot and whirlwind. Again, when our blessed Lord "was taken up" (Acts 1:9), it was in full, open view of His disciples.

Furthermore, why should the expression "was not found" be thought to indicate secrecy? Similar expressions are found in other connections and they could not mean secrecy, or refer to something done in a corner. Thus we read that in the last days "the mountains were not found" (Rev. 16:20); of Babylon, that it "shall be found no more at all" (Rev. 18:21); and of its inhabitants, that none "shall be found any more in thee" (verse 22). On what linguistic or exegetical authority, then, can one introduce the idea of something happening secretly?

**10. SECOND COMING "BLESSED HOPE" OF THE CHURCH.**—In summation: Seventh-day Adventists believe that Christ's second advent will be personal, visible, audible, bodily, glorious, and premillennial, and will mark the completion of our redemption. And we believe that our Lord's return is imminent, at a time that is near but not disclosed. Adventists' joy, hope, and expectation over the prospect are well expressed by the following excerpts from the writings of Ellen G. White:

One of the most solemn and yet most glorious truths revealed in the Bible is that of Christ's second coming.—*The Great Controversy*, p. 299.

The coming of Christ to usher in the reign of righteousness has inspired the most sublime and impassioned utterances of the sacred writers.—*Ibid.*, p. 300.

The proclamation of Christ's coming should now be, as when made by the angels to the shepherds of Bethlehem, good tidings of great joy. Those who really love the Saviour cannot but hail with gladness the announcement founded upon the word of God, that He in whom their hopes of eternal life are centered is coming again, not to be insulted, despised, and rejected, as at His first advent, but in power and glory, to redeem His people.—*Ibid.*, pp. 339, 340.

# Varied Concepts of the Millennium

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## QUESTION 38

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*Many varied and conflicting teachings are current on the millennium. How, and when, did these conflicting views arise?*

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### I. Basic Definitions and Differentiations in Millennialism

The importance of these questions is apparent from the molding influence that varying millennial views have exerted on the Christian faith over the centuries. In order to understand the really fundamental differences, a definition of the terms used to describe the major schools of millennialism—premillennial, postmillennial, and amillennial—is first essential.

1. **MILLENNIUM.**—The Merriam-Webster unabridged dictionary, second edition (1949), defines the word “millennium”:

1. A thousand years. . . . 2. Specif., the thousand years mentioned in Revelation xx, during which holiness is to be triumphant. Some believe that during this period Christ will reign on earth.

This definition is more nearly accurate than that in *The New Schaff-Herzog*, which applies the word to a reign *on earth before the end of the world*, disregarding the fact that these specifications are interpretation rather than definition.

2. CHILIASM.—As generally used chiliasm is the teaching that the saints will reign with Christ *on earth* during the millennial thousand years. The identification of the one thousand years of Revelation 20 with various Old Testament prophecies of a literal kingdom on earth (not an express stipulation of Scripture) has periodically brought its advocates into disrepute because of the materialistic expectations and excesses sometimes accompanying this concept.

3. PREMILLENNIALISM.—Premillennialism posits the second coming of Christ and the first resurrection as *preceding* the thousand years, with the second resurrection to *follow* the millennium. (It also commonly adds a chiliastic corollary, that when Christ comes He will set up a kingdom *on earth*, in which the saints will reign with Christ over the nations.) The millennial reign is thus introduced by supernatural and catastrophic events.

4. POSTMILLENNIALISM.—Postmillennialism sees the “thousand years” as possibly a literal period, but more probably an indefinite period of time, preceding the second advent. The “first resurrection” is therefore a revival of the spirit, doctrine, principles, and character of the Christian martyrs and departed saints. And after the evil of the world has been largely overthrown, paradisiac blessedness will be ushered in by Christ’s coming and the general resurrection. Thus the millennium is introduced without direct divine intervention.

5. AMILLENNIALISM.—Amillennialists assert that Revelation 20 is simply teaching spiritual truths in symbolic language. This concept eliminates an actual millennial reign, or regards it as the entire Christian

Era. The two resurrections are fused into one, and the different aspects of the judgment become one great assize—Christ simply comes at the end of the age to judge the world. Thus amillennialism seeks to avoid the difficulties believed to beset both premillennialism and postmillennialism.

With the major types of millennialism now before us, we will sketch in bold outline the course of millennialism across the centuries, in order to have the necessary historical setting for our own views, which follow in Question 39.

## II. Early-Church Premillennialism

**CHARACTERISTICS OF EARLY-CHURCH PREMILLENNIALISM.**—Premillennialism was strong in the early Christian church. The believers looked for a breakup of the Roman Empire and the coming of a malign antichrist who would persecute the saints for three years and a half, followed by the personal advent of Christ. They expected a literal first resurrection at the advent, and the setting up of a thousand-year kingdom of the saints reigning with Christ. Then at the end of the millennium, the second resurrection, the final judgment, and the retribution of the wicked would take place, they believed, followed by the eternal reward of the righteous in the new heavens and new earth. This belief they based on the New Testament prophecies, together with the historical prophecies of Daniel, in which they found themselves under the fourth kingdom. They expected the further unfolding of these events in history soon after their day, for they looked for the second advent shortly. (Early-century churchmen had,

of course, no idea of such a long stretch of time between the first and second advents as has now already ensued. Some looked to A.D. 500 for the end of the age.) Among the premillennialist writers were pseudo-Barnabas, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Montanus, Tertullian, Nepos, Commodianus, Hippolytus, Methodius, Victorinus, Lactantius, and Apollinaris.\*

The millennial kingdom was described variously, though it was generally understood to be on earth, with the saints reigning over the nations in the flesh. Some had literal Jerusalem, rebuilt, as the capital; Tertullian's view had the New Jerusalem descending from heaven. Some emphasized the spiritual joys, others the material prosperity, fertility, and plenty. Some had a Roman emperor as antichrist preceding the millennium, others a Jew (during a delayed seventieth week, according to Hippolytus, though this was not the majority view). Methodius saw the millennium as a day of judgment; Victorinus, as a sabbath rest (based on the seven-thousand-year theory). By the time of Lactantius the full-fledged millennial doctrine was filled with fantastic elements from sources extraneous to the Biblical millennium, on the glories of the renovated earth, the multiplied offspring of the righteous in the flesh, and the enslavement of the survivors of the unregenerate nations. The increasing "carnality" of these ideas caused a revulsion of feeling against chiliasm, especially as allegorizing and philosophical concepts molded the church. Jerome protested that the kingdom of the saints was heavenly, not earthly, and Augustine, who would

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\*Sources for this section are found in D. H. Kromminga, *The Millennium in the Church*, and L. E. Froom, *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, vols. 1 to 4.

not have objected to a millennial kingdom in which the joys were spiritual rather than material, abandoned premillennialism and led the church into a new theory.

It is to be noted that although in this period, and later, there can be found hints of the belief that the Jews would finally be converted before the advent, the early church firmly believed that the kingdom prophecies were for the church as the true Israel. That view is very different from the idea of a Jewish kingdom in the millennium, as held by many modern premillennialists who revert to the early chiliastic view of the earthly millennial kingdom.

### III. The Augustinian Postmillennialism

PREMILLENNIALISM ABANDONED IN TIME OF AUGUSTINE.—Long before Augustine, Origen of Alexandria had opposed the increasingly materialistic chiliasm of many, and millennialism itself. And by spiritualization and allegorization he explained away the basis of the eschatological hope—a literal resurrection, a literal second advent, and literal prophecies. Soon afterward came the concept that God's everlasting kingdom is the dominant church established on earth. This was introduced by Eusebius, following Constantine's “conversion” to Christianity and the cessation of pagan persecution. Augustine, likewise challenging the excesses of chiliastic premillennialism, now introduced a *spiritualization of the millennium.*\* The first resurrection was spiritual. The thousand years was the period between

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\*Augustine based his postulate on the “recapitulation” theory, derived from Tichonius—that the Apocalypse goes back and repeats, covering the Christian Era again and again under the symbols of the seven churches, seven seals, seven trumpets, the beasts, and lastly, the millennium.

the first and second advents, with the second resurrection—the literal resurrection of the body—at its close.\* (Present-day Protestant amillennialism takes much the same position on the two resurrections.)

Augustine's "thousand years" was a figurative numeral—an expression of the whole period between Christ's ministry and the end of the world. Augustine also identified the thousand years of Revelation 20 with the sixth millennium of the world's history, and equated the seventh or sabbath period with eternity.

The devil's "binding" was his expulsion from the hearts of the believers, the Catholic Church was the "kingdom of Christ," and the church rulers were already sitting in judgment. To Augustine the triumph of Christianity seemed sure. The "beast" was the ungodly world, and "Gog and Magog" the devil's nations. The "camp of the saints" is the church, and "devouring fire" their burning zeal, while the "New Jerusalem" is the church's present glory. Thus it was that Augustine's millennial kingdom was accepted as a *then-present reality* on earth. It was a basically new philosophy of history.

This concept became dominant by the fifth century, and held general sway for over a thousand years as the controlling philosophy of Roman Catholic Christendom. Thus early premillennialism practically disappeared under the advancing triumph-of-the-church concept.

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\*The new Catholic *Commentary on Holy Scripture*, 1953, p. 1207, counsels its readers to "regard the chaining of Satan and the reign of the Saints as the whole period subsequent to the Incarnation."

## IV. Medieval Pure-Church Postmillennialism

Augustinianism prevailed throughout the Middle Ages, along with increasing dominance of the church in Western Europe. But with the passing of A.D. 1000 and the approach of the year 1260, a new concept arose. The Augustinian theory looked for a *triumphant* church; medieval Joachim and the Joachimite Spirituals came to look for a *pure* church.

Very apparent ecclesiastical departures on the part of the Papacy made it no longer possible to equate the visible church with the kingdom of God on earth. So the medieval pure-church ideal took the form of a new postmillennialism, in which the golden age (not, however, of a thousand years) was placed in the future, preceding the second advent. Sharp criticism from various loyal sons and daughters of the church began to call for reform and to urge a spiritual revival. Joachim of Floris (1190) stressed a new millennial ideal—that of a *pure church*. This was based on a trinitarian-dispensational concept—the age of the Father, the age of the Son, and the age of the Spirit. (This was not, however, at all akin to modern dispensationalism.) He held that the promised Age of the Spirit would begin before A.D. 1260, on the year-day principle. A future age marked by the dominance of the Spirit was increasingly stressed by the Franciscan Spirituals, who held that a *purification of the church* was so greatly needed that nothing but the coming of the Holy Spirit in mighty power could effect it. A future as well as a past binding of Satan was taught by two Franciscan Spirituals, Pierre Jean d'Olivi (died 1298), who cas-

tigated the hierarchical church as the apocalyptic "Babylon," and Ubertino of Casale (c. 1312), who identified a pope with the apocalyptic "beast." Arnold of Villanova (died c. 1313) expected an internal reform of the church to be accomplished by a pope. And Milicz of Kremsier (died 1374) held that the church must be cleansed of heretics before the consummation. So the pure-church ideal was widely heralded, and the overthrow of antichrist connected with a future binding of Satan.

In the medieval agitation for reform in the church there came a rising chorus of voices naming the Papacy as the Antichrist. Later the Reformed groups, who identified Antichrist with the apostate papal church, similarly sounded the call to come out of polluted Babylon. Thus in Protestantism the pure-church concept was also stressed. Some, however, sought to blend the medieval pure-church ideal with the earlier triumphant-church-kingdom concept, to be brought about through political and social revolution, as will be noted in the next section.

#### **V. Premillennialism Revived in Post-Reformation Times**

The great Reformers, occupied with developing such doctrines as justification by faith, were not directly concerned with the millennium. They continued the Augustinian view of the millennial kingdom as the church, though there was a strong emphasis on the Antichrist as the Papacy. As the Reformation became a movement of state churches, the pure-church millennialists became fringe groups, such as the Anabaptists. Indeed, the main Protestant churches tended to dis-

parage millennialism because of the excesses of some chiliasts, such as the Münsterites on the Continent and, later, the Fifth Monarchy men in England, and because of the political and revolutionary elements in their schemes for introducing the kingdom of God on earth. But the more stable elements of these fringe groups left a strong impress on the later Baptists and Congregationalists. It was from such a source that the early American churches became imbued with the ideal of the pure church establishing the kingdom of God before the coming of Christ.

It was after the Reformation period that Joseph Mede combated the Augustinian view with his scheme of prophetic interpretation that again put the millennium in the future, after the second advent, with a literal first and a second resurrection. Thenceforth, a historicist premillennialism flourished in Protestantism with such vigor that it was never completely displaced, even through the period of ascendancy of Whitbyan postmillennialism.

## VI. Whitby's Eighteenth-Century Postmillennialism

The postmillennialism first introduced by Daniel Whitby in 1703\* holds that the second advent will come only *after a thousand years*—literal or otherwise—of world betterment, with increasing peace, right-

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\*Whitby denied the common concepts of the first and second literal resurrections, holding that the first "resurrection" is simply the glorious renewal of the church. The second advent, he affirmed, is simply a spiritual "effusion." To Whitby the saints on earth are *separated* from Christ during the millennium, as Christ and the dead of ages past are all in heaven. Whitby ends the period with the Lord's descent, accompanied by the spirits of just men made perfect. This postmillennial advent brings the day of judgment, with the destruction of remaining sinners and eternal salvation for the saints.

eousness, and world conversion. Through the elimination of war and evil, the world as well as the church will enter upon its golden age. Postmillennialism maintains that the millennium will be brought about without direct divine intervention, without any catastrophic event—simply by the operation of the Holy Spirit through the gospel and the regular agencies of grace. A truly Christian government will be established over the world, with Satan ultimately vanquished. During this time the Jews will be converted, but not necessarily with national restoration in Palestine.

The effect of this new hypothesis upon Protestantism was profound. As men began to contemplate a great vista of peace and safety, they ceased to be eager for the second advent, and came to substitute the expectancy of death for Christ's return. And this captivating postmillennial theory swept like a tidal wave over European Protestantism. Introduced into America by Jonathan Edwards and Samuel Hopkins, it became the dominant view by 1800.

Postmillennialists hold that the "binding" and "loosing" of Satan are figurative—the limiting of Satan's power and a possible flare-up of that power just before Christ appears. But after the vials of God's wrath are poured out, the remaining wicked are destroyed. Then the eternal kingdom will be established. The fact that the gospel has already been widely preached and accepted, lends plausibility to the view that the same process will continue in augmented form until the world is evangelized and Christianized.

While Campegius Vitringa believed the second resurrection to be that of the literal dead, Whitby ex-

plained it as the uprising of antichristian principles in the confederacy of "Gog and Magog." According to both Whitby and Vitringa, the "New Jerusalem" is the blessedness of the earthly church during the millennium. On the contrary, Brown and Faber explain it as the company of the saints after the millennium.

"Optimistic" postmillennialism, which later came to be tied in with the theory of evolution and human progress, has long chided premillennialism over its "pessimism." Prior to World War I, postmillennialists declared that humanity had made too much progress ever to have another war. But even as the champions of such a roseate philosophy were denying the plain declarations of the Word, the most terrible catastrophes of all time struck. Events of recent decades, from World War I onward—including the impotent League of Nations, the second world war, and its sequel—have revealed the fallacy of such reasoning, and have shattered such claims. Whitbyan postmillennialism is bankrupt today.

## VII. Resurgent Premillennialism in Nineteenth Century

1. PREMILLENNIALISM REVIVED.—In the early nineteenth century came a resurgence of premillennialism in the far-flung Old World Advent awakening and the New World Advent movement. It has been said that three hundred Anglican and seven hundred nonconformist clergymen in Britain—with many others on the Continent, North Africa, and India—stressed the approaching destruction of the Papacy and the Turk, the literal first resurrection and translation of the saints attending the second advent, marking the beginning of the millennium, with the second resurrection at its

close. Some held that the judgment precedes the advent, followed by the renovation of the earth at the millennium's close. Another angle came sharply to the forefront—the anticipated rule to be exercised by the Jews on earth while the church is in heaven, or at least in a glorified state.

These premillennialists were called literalists in contrast with the postmillennialist spiritualizers. Historicists at first, these premillennialists held that, preceding the second advent, antichrist would gather his followers for a last terrific assault upon God's people, and institute a dreadful tribulation, through which the church must pass. Then, at the close of the tribulation, Christ would appear, the dead in Christ would rise first, in a literal resurrection, with the living saints translated and "caught up" to meet the Lord in the air. Finally, at the close of the millennium, Satan would be loosed and gather the nations to war against the saints. But they would all be overwhelmed by fire from heaven.

2. **SECRET RAPTURE INTRODUCED IN BRITAIN.**—Radical innovations were soon introduced, as Edward Irving and others espoused futurism. Irving's Catholic Apostolic Church, established in 1832 (claiming the revival of the apostolate, of prophecy, and of speaking with tongues), introduced the concept of a "secret rapture," \* and a new sacrament—the "sealing." Babylon they

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\*One of the Plymouth Brethren, Dr. S. P. Tregelles (*The Hope of Christ's Second Coming*, 1864, pp. 34-37), a contemporary, says of the origin of this "theory of a secret coming of Christ":

"I am not aware that there was any definite teaching that there should be a Secret Rapture of the Church at a secret coming until this was given forth as an 'utterance' in Mr. Irving's church from what was then received as being the voice of the Spirit. But whether anyone ever asserted such a thing or not it was from that supposed revelation that the modern doctrine and the modern phraseology respecting it arose. It came, not from Holy Scripture, but from that which falsely pretended to be the Spirit of God."

held was the corrupt church, now ripe for judgment. The great tribulation was to come between the resurrection of the righteous and the "rapture" of the saints, and the overthrow of Satan—this to be followed by the millennial reign of Christ and His saints on earth.

At the same time, the Plymouth Brethren, following J. N. Darby, similarly taught a pretribulation rapture as the initial coming of Christ *for* His saints. They put the antichrist and his three-and-a-half-year persecution after the coming of Christ for the first resurrection, in the delayed seventieth week, at the end of which would be a further visible coming, or "revelation," of Christ *with* His saints, for the judgment of the living nations. While the Irvingites believed a "sealing" would provide escape from the great tribulation, Darby held that no Christian would pass through it. Darby also is credited with the introduction of dispensationalism, although it was not entirely new with him. The teaching of these two groups—the Irvingites and the followers of Darby, particularly the latter—has profoundly influenced present-day fundamentalist premillennialism.

### VIII. American Premillennialism in the Nineteenth Century

In America the new premillennialism vigorously opposed the strongly entrenched postmillennialism that was flourishing in the New World atmosphere of reform, utopianism, and general rosy optimism for the perfectibility of mankind.\*

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\*Wholly apart from the great Second Advent Movement of Miller and his associates, and largely prior thereto, there were a number of small, eccentric, chiliastic

1. NEW WORLD ADVENT MOVEMENT PREMILLENNIAL.—The widespread New World Advent movement in the fourth and fifth decades of the nineteenth century, counterpart of the Old World awakening, was led by a thousand premillennialist heralds. It was an interdenominational movement, surpassing the Old World emphasis in extent, intensity, and clarity. This included the Millerite movement, probably 100,000 strong. All, including literalists, were ardent premillennialists holding that the millennial period would be introduced by the second personal advent and bounded by the two literal resurrections. Some taught the restoration of the Jews and other views derived from the writings of the British literalists; at least one held a rapture theory, though the separated seventieth week was a later importation. They were historicists, with a papal (or Mohammedan) Antichrist. Futurism developed later among American premillennialists. The literalists were regarded by the Millerites as brethren and allies against postmillennialism in proclaiming "the Advent near," in spite of their differences on the nature of the millennium.

The literalists disagreed with the postmillennialists on the means of setting up the millennial kingdom, and to a considerable degree on the nature of the kingdom. However, they agreed with them in separating the millennium from the eternal state; they had the unregenerate nations still on earth, with birth and death, sin

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or utopian organizations in North America that practiced communal living. Some introduced strange sectarian, political, theosophical, or dispensational chiliiasm—but held the reign of the saints to be with Christ *on earth* during the thousand years. These, in varying degrees, combined their eccentricities with premillennialism or postmillennialism, but stressed, along with their oddities, the familiar ideals of the pure church and the chiliastic earthly reign of the saints with Christ.

and repentance, still operating. There was a confusion of views on the relationship of the glorified saints to the unregenerate nations, and the part played by the Jews, and also on the prophetic fulfillments leading to the millennium, which was variously expected as the restoration of the Jews, the cleansing of the church, the fall of the Papacy, Mohammedanism, or the Turks, or some other event.

**2. THE MILLERITES INTRODUCE NEW MILLENNIAL CONCEPT.**—Through this tangle of conflicting millennial expectations William Miller and his associates cut a clean swath in the direction of a new and different concept. "No temporal millennium," they said. By that they meant that the millennial reign was not in "time," with death, decay, and sin still present, but was the first portion of the *eternal* state. They held that when Christ comes again the day of human probation is ended, that all the sinners are slain by the overpowering brightness of the second advent, and all the redeemed are resurrected and/or transformed for eternity. They taught that the earth is renewed by fire, and that on it begins the kingdom of eternity—which is merely punctuated at the end of a thousand years by the final disposal of "the rest of the dead." That is, the sinners will be resurrected and, led by the released Satan, will attempt to take the Holy City, which has come down out of heaven to the earth; and then comes the final judgment and the execution of the sentence on the wicked.

Thus the Millerites denied, on the one hand, the postmillennialist spiritualization of the millennium into a human utopia, and on the other hand, the premillennialist literalism that required detailed fulfill-

ments, after the second advent, of the Old Testament prophecies of the earthly rule of Israel over carnal nations.

3. A NONTEMPORAL, NON-JEWISH MILLENNIUM DISTINGUISHES MILLERISM.—The Millerite view that during the millennium only the immortalized saints are living—including redeemed Jews and Gentiles, without distinction—eliminated at one stroke both the temporal and the Jewish aspect of the millennial reign. This, not date setting, was the basic difference that set the Millerites apart from their contemporaries, both premillennialist and postmillennialist.

There were opponents of Miller in both camps who set approximately the same time as he for either the beginning of the millennium or the second advent or both, but who attacked the Millerite view that the millennium was to be the beginning of the eternal state and not a golden age of the church or a kingdom of the Jews (for example, George Bush, postmillennialist, and Richard Shimeall, premillennialist). Unfortunately only the *disappointment of the Millerites* is remembered today, because *their* hopes were more specific, more spectacular, and more widely publicized. It should be remembered that the others were equally mistaken, and *their* dates also passed by without the glorious events they expected.

#### IX. Later Development of Premillennialism

In the latter half of the century premillennialism and postmillennialism tended to follow a new line of cleavage. Postmillennialism, with its program of progressive righteousness, tended to ally itself with the

humanistic and evolutionary view of human progress, and to merge into the social gospel and modernism. At the same time premillennialism tended to become equated with fundamentalism. And premillennialism flowed in two streams rising from the two views exemplified by the Millerites and the literalists.

1. **ADVENTIST VIEWS DERIVED FROM MILLERITES.**—Following the breakup of the Millerite movement came the formation of Adventist denominations. Of these the Seventh-day Adventists became the leading group, continuing and developing further the Millerite type of premillennialism, with a nontemporal, non-Jewish millennium. (The Seventh-day Adventist understanding of the millennium appears in the answer to Question 39).

2. **LITERALISM BECOMES FUTURIST, DISPENSATIONALIST.**—Most premillennialists outside the Adventist churches eventually abandoned the historicist for the futurist position. Rising among the literalists and developing through Plymouth Brethrenism, there gradually grew up a full-fledged system of futurist-pretribulationist-dispensationalist teaching propagated by professional evangelists, interdenominational prophetic conferences, and Bible schools. This system has largely pre-empted the term "premillennialism," though not all premillennialists hold it, and there is sharp divergence over various details.

Present-day pretribulationists, now constituting an influential group, hold that there are two stages to the second coming, and that when Christ comes *for* His own, the watching saints are first secretly caught away, and so avoid the tribulation. Meanwhile the Jews, hav-

ing returned to Jerusalem, restore their system of sacrifices centered in a rebuilt temple. The malign Anti-christ then sets up his kingdom, and the three-and-one-half-year tribulation begins. This all comes within a fateful seven-year period—the seventieth week of Daniel 9. Then comes the second aspect of the second coming—the revelation, or appearing, of Christ, *with* His saints, to establish the millennial kingdom, in which Christ and the saints reign. The surviving nations are ruled by the now converted Jews in the flesh on a partly renovated earth, on which the law is again in effect after being in abeyance throughout the church age. The inwardly rebellious nations, ruled with “a rod of iron” during the thousand years, revolt in the end, and the judgment ensues. Then the millennial kingdom continues in the eternal state.

Along with this came the development of an elaborate division of the Bible into dispensational compartments (with antinomian tendencies), in a doctrine of mutual exclusiveness between law and grace. (For the vast difference between modern futurist premillennialism and the historic premillennialism of the early church, see pp. 302-308).

This form of premillennialism has been opposed in recent years by the view called amillennialism—in some ways a revival of the Augustinian view.

#### X. Amillennialism Revives Augustinian Concept

1. A FIGURATIVE MILLENNIUM.—To amillennialists there is no actual, literal thousand years as a special closing period of human history, distinct from the present era. *The millennium is simply the present period*

*in which we are now living*, extending from the first to the second advent of Christ. As in the Augustinian theory of the Catholics, the “first resurrection” is spiritual—from death in sin to spiritual life in Christ. The general resurrection of all the dead occurs at the second advent, which will usher in the eternal world. Satan was “bound” by the first advent of our Lord, and expelled from the individual hearts of His followers. Thus their “reign” with Him begins.

This “reign” of the saints embraces both the spiritual reign of the spirits in heaven, and the reign of the saints with Christ on earth before the final judgment. The “thousand” they interpret as the symbolic number of perfection—the complete period between the two coming of Christ. The concept of Satan’s being now bound in any world sense, as some claim, is absurd, they say, as world conditions testify. And the “resurrection” will go wherever the gospel is preached, continuing until the second coming of Christ at the end of time, to destroy antichrist, raise the dead, and establish the eternal kingdom.

**2. AMILLENNIALISM AND PREMILLENNIALISM COMPARED.**—Like the premillennialist, the amillennialist believes there will be an admixture of good and evil up to the time of the second advent, and he does not believe the world will get better and better, or that all society will be Christianized. Rather, when the hosts of Satan are on the point of complete victory, Christ appears in glory, and resurrected dead and the transfigured living saints are caught up to be with their Saviour.

But amillennialists reject a literal interpretation that

calls for a re-establishment of the Jews as God's people and a restoration of the Temple ritual. Neither do they look for an actual battle of Gog and Magog at the close of the millennium. In other words, the prophecies merely predict the peace that will come to earth as the result of Christ's first advent as Saviour, and in a figurative way portray the blessings and glories of the world to come, the exalted glory of the redeemed, and the completeness of Satan's overthrow, which ends in total triumph for Christ. That is amillennialism, which has wide acceptance today. In varying forms, it has its adherents among Roman Catholics, Protestant liberals, and even within the ranks of conservative Reformed theology. (See John F. Walvoord, "Amillennial Eschatology," *Bibliotheca Sacra*, January-March, 1951.)

Thus the pendulum, as concerns the millennial reign, has swung back and forth, producing a confusing and conflicting picture. But what constitutes an inseparable factor in the complicated setting that lies back of the differing positions is the chiliastic concept of millennialism—that of a literal reign on earth and in time, between the present age and the eternal state. This point needs discussion.

#### XI. The Trail of Materialistic Chiliasm Across the Centuries

As noted, a prominent feature of early church pre-millennialism was the chiliastic concept—that the reign of the saints would be exercised *on earth*. But for this the early church went outside Revelation 20—the only Biblical reference to the thousand years—which does not describe or locate the reign. The idea of a material,

earthly kingdom was derived partly from the use of the Old Testament prophecies of the Messianic kingdom, which the church applied to itself. Further, the Jewish Christians were steeped in the Jewish apocalyptic writings, which embodied their nationalistic aspirations for a glorious earthly kingdom, and which contain fantastic accounts of the fertility, plenty, and material prosperity of that period. At the same time the Gentile converts from the Roman world of the first century had a background of then-current pagan dreams of a coming golden age. Even the Jewish apocalyptic notion of thousand-year periods corresponding to the days of creation week was matched by pagan traditions (Etruscan and Persian) of a six-thousand-year duration of the race.

Since the early church regarded itself as the true Israel of the promises, it applied the kingdom prophecies to the saints, not to the Jews, though it saw no hope of an actual church kingdom in the then-present Roman age. Considering the fact that the church was tinged with current philosophical concepts, such as that of the inherent evil of matter, it could not allow a material kingdom in the new heavens and new earth of the eternal state. Hence it naturally placed this Jewish-pagan-Christian golden age during the millennium, after the advent, but before eternity. The ideas were superimposed upon the scriptural doctrine of the millennium, and the prophecies of the new earth were put on a definitely materialistic and temporal basis. The persecuted Christians came to aspire to an earthly rule of a triumphant church. But the extraneous teaching of gross materialism—the claims of fantastic fertility and even carnality that were predicted of the reign of the

saints *on earth*—became so repugnant to many that chiliasm was regarded as a heresy, and for a brief period the Apocalypse was in some quarters regarded as not apostolic, and therefore was even omitted from the Sacred Canon.\*

So it was, that because of chiliastic views of the millennium, the very doctrine of millennialism was discredited. Similarly, abandonment of premillennialism was hastened by the favorable status the church attained in the fourth century under Constantine. As their influence steadily increased, the Christians began to apply the predictions of the future Messianic kingdom to the then-present Christian church. Eventually the exchange of the *future dominion of the saints* in the Holy City for the *present dominion of the church* on earth, became a basis for the totalitarian rule of medieval Catholicism, with its persecutions.

The Reformation had to resist a different but equally fallacious chiliasm—not only an earthly but a political and revolutionary kingdom of the saints, set up by fire and sword before the advent and the resurrection—witness the excesses of Thomas Müntzer and some of the Anabaptists, the prophets of Zwickau and the French prophets of the Cervennes and, later, the Fifth Monarchy men in England.

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\*According to Bishop B. F. Westcott (*A General Survey of the History of Canon of the New Testament*, 1875, ch. 20), by the close of the second century the Apocalypse was acknowledged as apostolic and authoritative throughout the church, except in the Syriac version. But after almost universal acceptance among the Fathers, it fell temporarily into discredit because of opposition to chiliastic millennialism by Dionysius of Alexandria (died 265), Cyril of Jerusalem (died 386) and Gregory of Nazianzus (died 389) excluded the Apocalypse from their catalogs of the New Testament books, and Chrysostom (died 407) nowhere quoted it. It was omitted from the canon list by the fourth-century Council of Laodicea. But in 367 Athanasius included it in his enumeration, and the Councils of Hippo (393) and Carthage (397) declared it canonical. Soon all doubts disappeared. (See *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, vol. 1, pp. 103-107.)

The earthliness of the millennial reign was given a new turn in Whitby's postmillennialism, with its churchly golden age. The early American churches were strongly chiliastic, inheriting the pure-church ideal from the Anabaptists, who passed it on to the Baptists and Congregationalists. Their chiliiasm raised exuberant hopes of a postmillennialist program of social regeneration to be realized in the churches. Thence also came numerous nineteenth-century attempts to bring the kingdom of God on earth, not only through revivalist-pietist church activity and varying reforms of every shade but also through sociopolitical channels and communal utopias. In the early-nineteenth-century expectation of the inauguration of the millennium such schemes multiplied rapidly. Also in the nineteenth century a "Judaistic" chiliiasm stemming from the extreme literalism of the British Advent awakening emphasized not only the conversion of the Jews but also a restoration of the Jewish nation, a rebuilding of the Jewish temple, and re-establishment of the sacrificial system, as well as a Jewish political domination, and a coercive "iron-rod" rule of Christ over the rebellious nations.

Nor is the doctrine of chiliiasm merely an academic question of what is to happen in the future, with no practical significance to us today. As a matter of fact, the political implications of this future-Jewish-kingdom concept are obvious, and its effects have been seen in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. There is evident at the present time an unfortunate confusion between recognizing the historical fulfillment of prophecy and attempting to use prophetic interpretation as an instrument for influencing political and interna-

tional policy. Stemming also from this futurist view that the Jews are to be God's elect, to whom all the kingdom prophecies must yet be literally fulfilled, is an unprecedented interpretive system with dangerous tendencies. It is embodied in a dispensationalist emphasis that rebuilds the wall of partition between Jew and Gentile that Jesus obliterated, that separates law from grace in thoroughly antinomian fashion, and that deflects from the Christian church the promises and the covenants and large portions of the Bible, especially the Gospels, giving to the Jew, rather than to the Christian, not only the Decalogue, but also the Beatitudes and the Lord's Prayer. Fortunately, although most premillennialists in the various churches today belong to this general school of thought, not all of them subscribe to all these views or carry them to their logical conclusions. It is unfortunate that some writers who have abandoned this futurist premillennialism have so often merely exchanged their chiliasm for amillennialism.

This survey calls attention to the fact that through the centuries the chiliastic expectation of an earthly millennial kingdom in the flesh, with coercive rule over unregenerate men, has been the root of doctrinal distortion, fanatical views, excess, totalitarianism, persecution, and even political revolution. None of these is inherent in premillennialism as based on the Scriptures, unmixed with Jewish traditions and pagan concepts, as will be shown in the answer to Question 39.

# Adventist Understanding of the Millennium

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## QUESTION 39

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*What do Adventists understand to be the chronological timing of the millennium in relation to the end of the age, the nature of its two resurrections, the sequence of its major events, and the outcome and sequel of the millennial period? Please outline your view.*

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The word "millennium" has come to have a specialized meaning in the minds of most Christians—a thousand-year period when Christ will reign on earth with His saints amid plenty, peace, and progressively increasing righteousness. The word does not occur in the Bible. It is derived from the Latin words *mille* and *annum*, meaning "thousand" and "year." A thousand-year reign of the saints with Christ is foretold in Revelation 20:2-7, but there is no statement in that chapter that the saints will reign with Christ *on earth* during this period.

The vision that delineates the thousand years is one of a series that must be considered as a chronological sequence if we are to succeed in placing the millennium in its proper relationship to other eschatological events. Revelation 19 depicts the second advent of our Lord. Chapter 20 speaks of the binding of

Satan, two resurrections one thousand years apart, the general judgment of evildoers, and their destruction in the lake of fire. Revelation 21 pictures the descent of the Holy City, New Jerusalem; and chapter 22 continues the description of the city and the joys of the redeemed in the eternal state. There seems to be nothing in these chapters to indicate that this is not a chronological sequence of events. With the aid of parallel Bible passages that describe the second coming of Christ, the resurrection, and the final punishment of the wicked, it is possible to outline the events of the millennium from beginning to end with an assurance of accuracy.

### I. The Second Advent of Christ

In Revelation 19 Christ is pictured at His second coming as a mighty warrior leading the armies of heaven to battle against the hosts of evil (verses 11-16). This emphasizes the effect of His coming upon the unsaved.

In Revelation 14 Christ is pictured as coming on a cloud, crowned as King of kings. In that chapter the gathering of the righteous and wicked is depicted under the figure of a harvest. In verses 15 and 16 the righteous are gathered as "the harvest of the earth." The wicked are also reaped as "the clusters of the vine of the earth"—"fully ripe" grapes—and "cast . . . into the great winepress of the wrath of God" (verses 18, 19). This "winepress" is mentioned again in chapter 19, where it is said of Christ that "he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God" (verse 15).

## II. The Death of All Sinners

To the rebellious sinners of earth Christ comes as judge and avenger, in overpowering glory, with fire and sword, in final battle against the hosts of evil men who make their last stand in defiance of Him, and He gives to the birds the flesh of the kings, captains, mighty men, and all men free and bond, small and great (Rev. 19:17-19). Revelation elsewhere pictures the same class of people cowering before the face of the Lamb, and the upheavals of nature accompanying the second advent—the heavens departing as a scroll and every mountain and island shaken out of place (Rev. 6:14-17). In both chapter 19 and chapter 14 the effect of Christ's coming on the wicked is described under the figure of treading out grapes in a winepress, with blood pouring out of the winepress by the space of 1,600 furlongs (Rev. 14:20). Overwhelming destruction could hardly be more graphically described. Not only does nature cooperate with an upheaval that changes the geography of the earth and shakes down all the work of men's hands, but all the organized opposition to God comes to a sudden end as men individually tremble before their Creator and true King and Lord.

The "beast" and "false prophet," symbols of organized apostasy in earlier visions of Revelation, who are accused of deceiving evil men into continued rebellion against God, are pictured as being cast alive into a lake of fire (Rev. 19:20). The apostle Paul, looking with prophetic eye down the stream of time, described the mystery of iniquity in a personalized name, "that Wicked" (2 Thess. 2:8), "whom the Lord shall con-

sume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." And Revelation 19 ends the description of the total destruction of the wicked with the words, "And the remnant [the remaining sinners] were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh" (verse 21). Making proper allowance for figures of speech and prophetic symbolism, we may conclude that all the unrighteous who do not meet their end in these upheavals will be destroyed by the brightness of Christ's visible presence as He appears "in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God" (2 Thess. 1:8).

### III. The Binding of Satan

The very next event described in the book of Revelation (chapter 20:1-3) is the binding of Satan with a great chain, under the figure of the dragon, in order that he might not deceive the nations for a thousand years. Since this is a symbolic scene, it is not necessary to suppose that either the chain or the bottomless pit is literal. The dragon is identified as Satan, and the meaning of the other symbols we may deduce from the context. Satan's followers have all been destroyed at the second advent. The righteous, as we shall see in the next section, are removed from his domain. The earth is in utter desolation, with dead bodies everywhere. It is only necessary, then, to understand by the symbols that Satan is consigned by divine fiat to the earth, there for one thousand years to ponder on the results of his rebellion against God.

#### IV. The Resurrection of the Righteous

The scene changes. John sees thrones of judgment on which sit "the blessed and holy" ones who have part in the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4, 6). "They came to life again, and reigned with Christ a thousand years" (verse 4, R.S.V.). Specifically John sees the martyrs and those who had gotten the victory over the beast and his image (prophetic symbols of apostasy, from chapters 13 and 14). Do those who reign with Christ during the thousand years include more than the martyrs and the faithful from the last generation who withstood the wiles of apostasy? The answer must be sought in other scriptures describing the resurrection that follows the second coming of Christ in power and great glory. Nowhere in the Bible (unless this be the case in Revelation 20) is there a mention of a resurrection of only martyrs; but there are references to "the resurrection of the just" (Luke 14:14) and "the resurrection of life" in contrast to "the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:29), which corresponds to the division in Revelation 20 between the two resurrections. "They that are Christ's" are raised "at his coming" (1 Cor. 15:23). "The dead in Christ shall rise" when the Lord descends from heaven "with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God" (1 Thess. 4:16). This is elsewhere referred to as "the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible" (1 Cor. 15:52). And Jesus described His coming in the clouds of heaven—seen by all, and mourned by the tribes of earth who are not ready for Him—as the time when at the sound of the trumpet

“his elect” are gathered from all the earth (Matt. 24:30; Mark 13:26, 27). All these accounts of a glorious, visible, audible coming, with the sounding of the trumpet, are connected with the gathering of Christ’s elect, the raising of the dead in Christ, and the changing from mortality to immortality. This is obviously the first resurrection of Revelation 20.

#### **V. The Translation of the Living Righteous**

The prophet John saw on the thrones of judgment those “which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands” (Rev. 20:4). Since there are only two classes of people on the earth when Christ comes—the righteous and the sinners, the “sheep” and the “goats” (Matt. 25:32, 33)—those who have not worshiped the beast must represent the living righteous in the last generation who have not bowed the knee to apostasy and who are prepared to welcome Christ when He comes. The apostle Paul describes that blessed event: “We shall not all sleep [die], but we shall all be changed” when “the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible,” for “this mortal must put on immortality” (1 Cor. 15:51-53). This is when “we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air” (1 Thess. 4:17).

#### **VI. The Righteous All Taken to Heaven**

In John’s view of the righteous during the thousand years, it is not specified just where the reigning with Christ takes place. He says simply, “I saw thrones, and

they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years" (Rev. 20:4). But other texts make this clear. In 1 Thessalonians 4:17, just quoted, the righteous are said to "meet the Lord in the air," "caught up . . . in the clouds." From this we conclude that Christ at His second advent does not touch the sin-polluted earth, but "he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (Matt. 24:31).

And the place to which the saved are taken at this time is indicated by the Saviour's own words of comfort to His disciples on the evening before His crucifixion: "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2, 3). The place to which Christ takes His saints is described as "my Father's house" where there are "many mansions" (more properly, "dwelling places"). The implication is almost unavoidable that the destination of the righteous at the second advent is heaven—not the earth from which they are removed at the last trump.\*

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\*Revelation 5:10 is sometimes quoted to prove that the saints will reign with Christ *on earth* during the millennium. The text reads: "And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." The expression "kings and priests" in this text is similar to an expression in Revelation 20: "they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years." There is nothing in Revelation 5:10 or its context to make it imperative to apply the "reign" "on the earth" to the thousand-year period of Revelation 20. The problem is, Can we consider these texts parallel? Exegesis cannot answer the question. Seventh-day Adventists believe that this "reign on the earth" applies to the righteous *after the close* of the millennium when the saints with Christ and the holy city return to this earth. (See Revelation 21, 22.) Then with sin and sinners destroyed, the righteous shall reign with Him through all eternity.

Thus we have an explanation of what happens to the two classes on earth when the Lord comes. While one is left on the earth, dead, for the birds to consume, the other is taken alive to be forever with the Lord.

### VII. The Judgment and the Thousand Years

The apostle John describes the activities of the saved in heaven very briefly: "They . . . reigned with Christ a thousand years" (Rev. 20:4). The question may properly be asked, Over whom will the saints reign if all the wicked have been destroyed? That the saints will receive the kingdom, is specifically stated in other texts. When the seventh angel sounds, "the kingdoms of this world . . . become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ" (Rev. 11:15), and Daniel speaks of the "kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdom" being "given to the people of the saints of the most High" (Dan. 7:27). The saints have been under the oppressive rule of the kings who have drunk of the wine of Babylon's fornication (Rev. 18:3). Now the tables are turned, and the saints of the Most High rule over their oppressors. It is true that the wicked are dead, but they will return to life at the end of the millennium (Rev. 20:5). They are shut up, as it were, later to receive their punishment. The exercise of dominion by the righteous over the wicked is indicated in the expressions, "judgment was given unto them" (verse 4) and "they . . . reigned with Christ" (verse 4), who has received "the kingdoms of this world" (Dan. 7:27).

In the discussion of the investigative judgment (see .

Question 36), were covered those features of the total judgment work that logically must be completed before Christ returns in glory. There we showed that the cases of those eventually saved must be examined before the second advent, and they must be "accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead" (Luke 20:35), and also "worthy to escape all these things [the troubles predicted by Christ] . . . and to stand before the Son of man" (Luke 21:36). Since all the wicked alive on earth at Christ's coming suffer the first death—the death common to all mankind—and do not live again until after the thousand years, the decisions regarding their punishment need not be reached before the second advent.

Both Daniel and John state that judgment was given to the saints, or the resurrected ones (Dan. 7:22; Rev. 20:4). In Revelation 20 the word "judgment" is from the Greek word *krima*, which generally means "sentence," "verdict," or "a decision rendered." Here *krima* seems to mean the authority to pass sentence. The passage does not refer to a verdict in favor of the righteous. In the Septuagint of Daniel, the word for "judgment" is *krisis*, the "act of judging"; but in the Theodotion Greek version it is rendered *krima*. The work of judgment referred to by the revelator is doubtless that spoken of by the apostle Paul: "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? . . . Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" (1 Cor. 6:2, 3). The work of judgment may well involve a careful investigation of the records of evil men and a decision regarding the amount of punishment due each sinner for his part in the rebellion against God.

Justice demands that great sinners be punished more severely than those whose sins were of a lesser nature. True, all sinners will be punished with eternal death, but eventual extinction can hardly be conceived of as a graduated punishment. It is the suffering before the second death that can be measured out to fit the extent of the sinner's personal responsibility for his rebellion. Christ Himself set forth the principle, "That servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes" (Luke 12:47, 48).

Since the saved reign on thrones "with Christ," the Judge of all men, it is apparent that they will concur in the decisions reached. Thus the saints are completely satisfied that God is just, and that even the destruction of incorrigible sinners is an evidence of His love.

### VIII. The Earth as Satan's Desolate Prison House

Not only do the Bible descriptions of the second coming of Christ depict the destruction of all the unrighteous living on the earth, but they also speak of the desolation of the globe. In Revelation 6, the earthly effects of Christ's coming are described briefly but graphically: "Every mountain and island were moved out of their places" (verse 14). In Revelation 11 the final events are again depicted: "There were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail" (verse 19). In Revelation 16, under the seventh plague, the details of the destruction are more vividly delineated: "The seventh angel poured out his

vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple in heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. . . . And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent" (verses 17-21).

It is difficult to imagine a more complete destruction of all the recognizable physical aspects of the earth's surface. An earthquake of such globe-shattering proportions as to shake down every mountain, and overwhelm every island in some vast tidal wave, could hardly leave anything of man's works intact in the wreckage. A substantial proportion of earth's inhabitants may lose their lives in this cataclysm, for it is said in Revelation 19:21: "The remnant [the terrified survivors who are left after all this has happened] were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth." Evidently the earthquake and hailstorm take place just as Christ appears in the clouds of heaven.

Satan's confinement to the earth in this condition is very fittingly described in the symbolic language of prophecy: "He laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand

years should be fulfilled" (Rev. 20:2, 3). He can "deceive the nations no more" because the unsaved are all dead, and the righteous, both the living and the resurrected of all ages, have been taken to heaven. With his fallen angel companions, Satan must await amid this desolation the final disposition of the cases of all the unredeemed in the court above. In contrast with this, we see the saints in heaven, those whom Satan thought to overcome and destroy, sitting in judgment (Rev. 20:4) with their Lord.

This is the time, we believe, when the words of the apostle Paul will be fulfilled: "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" (1 Cor. 6:3).

There is yet further significance that Seventh-day Adventists attach to Satan's thousand-year duress in desolation. In the symbolism of Israel's Day of Atonement in the typical sanctuary service of old, after the goat "for the Lord" was slain as an atoning sacrifice, the repentant sinner's guilt was canceled, and his sins were forgiven, in type, through the shed blood. Then, *after the atonement was thus completed*, the other goat ("for Azazel")—whom we believe symbolized Satan, man's malignant seducer—was declared guilty of the instigation of all evil, and was sent away alive into the uninhabited wilderness, bearing to oblivion the responsibility for all sins that he had led Israel to commit (Lev. 16:20-22).

Thus the penalty was first remitted to the repentant sinner through the divinely appointed Substitute, symbolizing Christ. Afterward, retributive punishment was visited upon the type of the archtempter and instigator of sin, who was consigned to the wilderness to die.

Even W. Robertson Nichol (*The Expositor's Greek Testament*, vol. 5, p. 471), after commenting on the shutting up of Satan in prison mentioned in Revelation 20, interestingly alludes to the "fettering of Azazel," \* and to "divine restraint" put for a time upon that "evil spirit."

This, we believe to be part of the picture involved in the imprisonment of Satan, as he is "shut up," without opportunity to deceive the nations until the thousand years are fulfilled.

## IX. Literal Resurrection the Central Fact of the Gospel

Seventh-day Adventists hold the Christian doctrine of the future life to be based on the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:51-55; 1 Thess. 4:16). The righteous, made alive through the first resurrection, have no part in the second death, which is for the wicked only. And after the second death there is no further resurrection, or future life, for the wicked. The second advent resurrection marks the beginning of the immortality of the saints (1 Cor. 15:51-57).

Revelation 20 separates the first resurrection *from that of the rest of the dead*, and places it at the beginning of the thousand years. Over those who come up in this resurrection the "second death hath no power" (verse 6). And we are expressly told that the resurrected saints, who are called "blessed and holy" (verse 6), live and reign (verse 4) with Christ during the

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\*Azazel is by many scholars recognized as a name indicating Satan. (See William Jenks, *Comprehensive Commentary of the Holy Bible*, vol. 1, p. 410; Charles Beecher, *Redeemer and Redeemed*, pp. 67, 68; *Jewish Encyclopedia*, vol. 2, p. 366; Albert Whalley, *The Red Letter Days of Israel*, p. 125; John Eadie, *Biblical Encyclopedia*, p. 577.

thousand years. They not only come to life, but continue to live forevermore.

The *first* resurrection (of the righteous) is obviously in contrast to the *second* (of the wicked), which occurs at the *end* of the thousand years. And the “rest of the dead” stand in contrast to the previously mentioned *first* group of the dead. The apostle Paul referred to the coming forth of “every man in his own order” (1 Cor. 15:23). First came the resurrection of Christ, the first fruits. Then comes that of the saints at the second advent. And now, in Revelation 20, at the close of the thousand years, the wicked come forth. There is definitely a resurrection of the just and of the unjust (Acts 24:15). These resurrections are a thousand years apart (Rev. 20:4, 5)—the first unto life and the second to damnation (John 5:29).

With hosts of others, we hold to the literal first resurrection (Greek, *anastasis*\*), as being that of the body. We firmly believe that the two resurrections—the first as well as the second—are literal, physical, corporeal, and that the first resurrection is confined to the saints, and precedes that of the sinners—the “rest of the dead”†—by the millennial thousand years. Language could not be plainer in establishing the fact of two resurrections.

We therefore totally reject the “spiritual” first resurrection hypotheses of Augustinianism, postmillennialism, and amillennialism as being wholly at variance with the inspired declarations. We believe that both

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\**Anastasis* is thirty-nine times rendered “resurrection,” and three times “rising.”

†There should be no uncertainty here. That the “rest of the dead” can only be taken to mean the *wicked* dead, is held by Alford, Faussett, Elliott, Milligan, Petavius, Gaebelein, Scofield, Morgan, Torrey, Moorehead, and many others.

resurrections are of those who have been literally dead and who are literally raised from the dead.

We are in complete agreement with the sound contention of Dean Henry Alford (*The Greek Testament*, 1884, vol. 4, pp. 732, 733), who declared:

If in such a passage the first resurrection may be understood to mean *spiritual* rising with Christ, while the second means *literal* rising from the grave;—then there is an end of all significance in language, and Scripture is wiped out as a definite testimony to any thing. If the first resurrection is spiritual, then so is the second, which I suppose none will be hardy enough to maintain: but if the second is literal, then so is the first, which in common with the whole primitive Church and many of the best modern expositors, I do maintain, and receive as an article of faith and hope.

We, as Adventists, believe that man is a candidate for immortality—which is to be received as a gift through Christ at His second advent (1 Cor. 15:51-57)—and likewise believe in unconscious sleep in death pending the resurrection. That is the reason for our hope in the resurrection. We hold with the great English Reformer, William Tyndale, Bible translator and martyr, who declared: “If their souls be in heaven, tell me why they be not in as good case as the angels be; and then what cause is there of the resurrection?”

Dr. William Temple, the late Archbishop of Canterbury, in the Drew Lecture on Immortality, in October, 1931, at Sion College, London, stated our view, as well as his own, when he asserted:

Man is not immortal by nature or of right; but there is offered to him resurrection from the dead and life eternal, if he will receive it from God and on God's terms. It [the core of the doctrine of the future life] is a doctrine, not of [“natural”] Immortality, but of Resurrection.

**X. Satan Loosed Briefly at Millennium's Close**

The scene on earth is indeed a gloomy one—wrecks of once-inhabited cities, and the ruin of pomp and splendor—grim reminders of the teeming world that Satan had led in futile rebellion against God. And now, at the close of the thousand years, Christ, accompanied by all the saints, descends to earth in awesome power, glory, and majesty, to execute judgment upon the wicked. He then bids the wicked dead to rise. And in answer to the summons, the mighty host, numberless as the sands of the sea, responds (Rev. 20:8). Not only the “sea” but “death” (sin’s inseparable ally) and “hell” (Greek, *hadēs*), grim receptacle of death’s prey, each delivers up its quota of the wicked dead.

This is in harmony with Isaiah’s description: “They shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and *after many days shall they be visited*” (Isa. 24:22). But this second resurrection is the resurrection of “damnation” (John 5:29). These that now come forth comprise the “rest of the dead,” who “lived not again until the thousand years were finished” (Rev. 20:5).\* And the nations of Gog and Magog are revived by means of, or resulting from, the second resurrection. And they overspread the earth.

The wicked are raised with the same rebellious spirit that possessed them in life, and stand in the presence of the Eternal. They see the vast city of God,

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\*While some claim that the clause, “the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years are finished,” is spurious, the English Revised, American Revised, and Revised Standard, as well as Rotherham, Tischendorf, Westcott and Hort, Griesbach, Wordsworth, Lachmann, Tregelles, Nestle, Weymouth, and Alford all retain it. In fact, only one major manuscript, the Codex Sinaiticus, omits the clause.

the New Jerusalem, which descends from God out of heaven (Rev. 21:2, 3). Christ returns to the same Mount of Olives, outside Old Jerusalem (Zech. 14:4), from which He ascended after His resurrection, when the angelic messengers gave assurance of His return from heaven (Acts 1:9-12).

Through the resurrection of the wicked, Satan is thus "loosed" for a "little season" (Rev. 20:3). His enforced idleness is over, after his thousand-year period of captivity (verses 7, 8). Desperate hope springs once again in his evil heart as he sees the innumerable hosts of the wicked of all ages. Then comes the last mighty struggle for supremacy. Deceiving them into thinking that they can take the city of God, he marshals the wicked hordes into frenzied battle array in a final, futile assault \* upon the "camp of the saints," the beloved Holy City, in an endeavor to overthrow the kingdom of God (verses 8, 9). The wicked who stubbornly refused an entrance into the City of God through the merits of Christ's sacrificial atonement, now determine to gain admission and control by siege and battle.

The last act in the great conflict of the ages now takes place, as the entire human race meets face to face for the first and last time. Satan's supreme attempt proves that he is still in rebellion, and evil men show themselves still to be only evil. The eternal separation of the righteous from the wicked is now irrevocably fixed. Then, from the great white throne, the sentence of doom is pronounced upon the wicked.

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\* "Went up" (verse 9), according to Düsterdieck, is an idiomatic expression for a military expedition, the place of attack usually being an elevated position—here, that of Jerusalem—seen from all quarters. In other words, it is a portrayal of an invading army overspreading the land.

And the sentence is followed by immediate execution.

It is evidently during this last episode that the Master's words come to pass: "There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out" (Luke 13:28).

### XI. Final Destruction of Satan and the Wicked

The drama of the ages ends in Satan's final and irrevocable overthrow, and his utter extinction—as well as that of all who follow him—when fire comes down from God out of heaven and devours him (2 Peter 3:10, 11; Rev. 20:9). The very surface of the earth appears to melt, and becomes a vast seething "lake of fire" (Rev. 20:10), for the judgment and "perdition of ungodly men" (2 Peter 3:7).\*

The earth burns "as an oven"; the wicked "shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts" (Mal. 4:1). So in the cleansing flames of the final conflagration, the wicked—Satan, evil angels, and impenitent men—are all at last destroyed by fire, root and branch. Even death and hades, joint partners, are cast into this lake of fire (Rev. 20:14), with no release, no escape from its dread destruction. The punishment is everlasting (Matt. 25:46),† and constitutes the second death, from which

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\*According to 2 Peter 3:3-13, the ancient world that perished in the flood of water prefigured the final deluge of fire. In this overwhelming conflagration not only do the ungodly perish, but the very earth dissolves, and its evil works are burned up. The "elements" are not annihilated, but are "melted," and so every taint of sin and trace of the curse are purged away.

† "Everlasting punishment" (Matt. 25:46) is not endless punishing, nor is "everlasting destruction" (2 Thess. 1:9) endless destroying, any more than "eternal

there is no resurrection. In this we are in accord with the late Archbishop William Temple, already cited, who, in discussing "the ultimate fate of the soul which refuses the love of God," went on record thus:

One thing we can say with confidence: everlasting torment is to be ruled out. If men had not imported the Greek and un-biblical notion of the natural indestructibility of the individual soul, and then read the New Testament with that already in their minds, they would have drawn from it a belief, not in everlasting torment, but in annihilation. It is the fire that is called aeonian, not the life cast into it.—*Christian Faith and Life*, 1931, p. 81 (address in 1931 in University Church at Oxford).

This fire was prepared primarily for the devil and his angels (Matt. 25:41). But it engulfs all who choose to follow them. This is the fire of Gehenna that completely consumes everything consigned thereto (Mark 9:43-48). David foretold: "Upon the wicked he shall rain snares [“quick burning coals,” margin], fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest: this shall be the portion of their cup" (Ps. 11:6). Such is the final doom that ends forever the long rebellion against God, His law, and His government.

But upon the righteous, who were raised in the first resurrection, "the second death hath no power" (Rev. 20:6). The saints dwell without harm in the city of God, amid "the devouring fire" and the "everlasting burnings" (Isa. 33:14). While to the wicked, God is a "consuming fire" (Heb. 12:29), to the righteous He is a protecting shield.

Out of the smoldering ruins of this old earth, there

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salvation" (Heb. 5:9) is endless saving, or "eternal judgment" (Heb. 6:2) is endless judging. The "eternal" pertains to the result, and not to the process.

springs forth "a new heaven and a new earth" (Rev. 21:1) wherein the redeemed find their everlasting inheritance and dwelling place. When the new earth appears, mourning, tears, pain, and death are all "passed away" (Rev. 21:4). Death is destroyed (1 Cor. 15:26; Rev. 21:4). There is no more curse (Rev. 22:3), and God is all in all (1 Cor. 15:28).

The close of the millennium marks the beginning of the eternal new earth state. The millennial events are all of divine wisdom, divine grace, divine power, and divine intervention. In this way, and at this time, we understand the redeemed of all nations will come into the promised possession of the everlasting kingdom of glory, for which they have so long waited (Dan. 7:18; Rev. 22:5).

Ellen G. White beautifully expresses our conviction:

The great controversy is ended. Sin and sinners are no more. The entire universe is clean. One pulse of harmony and gladness beats through the vast creation. From Him who created all, flow life and light and gladness, throughout the realms of illimitable space. From the minutest atom to the greatest world, all things, animate and inanimate, in their unshadowed beauty and perfect joy, declare that God is love."—*The Great Controversy*, p. 678.

## **IX. Questions on Immortality**



# Innate or Conditional Immortality

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## QUESTION 40

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*What is the Adventist teaching regarding the immortality of the soul? What do you understand by the terms "soul" and "spirit," and what is the relationship between the two? Are they synonymous and interchangeable terms?*

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There have long been two schools of thought on this question. Some have maintained that man was created mortal, so far as his body was concerned, but that he possessed an immortal entity called either a "soul" or a "spirit." Others have felt equally certain that man was not in any sense created immortal.\* They have been convinced that man was not in possession of an ethereal soul, or spirit, which survived death as a conscious entity, apart from the body.

Before we can discuss the question of immortality, either innate or conditional, it would seem best to define our terms; hence we will answer the second question first. In a case like this, where there is a difference of understanding regarding the meaning of

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\*The basis for such a conclusion is the statement of God to man in Eden: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17). The fact that man was created with the possibility of dying should he sin, evidences the fact that he was not immortal.

words, we should let the Bible itself, with the help of the original language usages, define its own terms.

### The Bible Meaning of "Soul"

In the Old Testament the word "soul" is translated from *nephesh*, a Hebrew word that occurs 755 times in the Old Testament. It is most frequently translated "soul," but it is also translated in many other ways.

*Nephesh* comes from the root *naphash*, a verb occurring only three times in the Old Testament (Ex. 23:12; 31:17; 2 Sam. 16:14), each time meaning "to revive oneself" or "to refresh oneself." The verb seems to go back to the basic meaning of breathing.

A definition for *nephesh* may be derived from the Bible account of the creation of man (Gen. 2:7). The record states that when God gave life to the body He had formed, the man literally "became a soul of life." The "soul" had not previously existed, but came into existence at the creation of Adam. A new soul comes into existence every time a child is born. Each birth represents a new unit of life uniquely different and separate from similar units. The new unit can never merge into another unit. It will always be itself. There may be countless individuals like it, but none that is exactly that unit. This uniqueness of individuality seems to be the idea emphasized in the Hebrew term *nephesh*.

*Nephesh* is applied not only to men but to animals. The clause "let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life" (Gen. 1:20) is literally, "let the waters swarm with swarms of souls of life [individ-

uals of life]." Hence animals as well as human beings are "souls."

This basic idea of "soul" being the individual rather than a constituent *part* of the individual seems to underlie the various occurrences of *nephesh*. It is therefore more accurate to say that a certain person *is* a soul than to say he *has* a soul. This is clearly expressed in Genesis 2:7: "Man became a living soul."

From the basic idea of a *nephesh* being an individual, or a person, springs the idiomatic use of *nephesh* for the personal pronoun. Expressions such as "my soul" are idiomatic for "I," "me"; "thy soul," for "you"; "their soul," for "they" or "them."

Since each new *nephesh* represents a new unit of life, *nephesh* is often used synonymously with "life." In 119 instances the K.J.V. translates *nephesh* by "life," and there are other instances where "life" would have been a more accurate translation.

The majority of the occurrences of *nephesh* may be appropriately translated by "person," "individual," "life," or by the appropriate personal pronoun. "The souls that they had gotten in Haran" (Gen. 12:5) is simply "the persons that they had gotten in Haran." "That soul shall be cut off" (Lev. 19:8) is simply "he shall be cut off."

When we turn to the New Testament, we find that the word "soul" is translated from the Greek word *psuchē*, with the meanings "life," "breath," or "soul." *Psuchē* is translated forty times in the New Testament as "life" or "lives," clearly with the meaning commonly attributed to the word "life" (Matt. 2:20; 6:25; 16:25). It is rendered fifty-eight times as "soul" or "souls"

(Matt. 10:28; 11:29; 12:18). In some of these instances it means simply "people" (Acts 7:14; 27:37; 1 Peter 3:20). In other instances it is translated as, or equivalent to, some personal pronoun (Matt. 12:18; 2 Cor. 12:15). At times it refers to the emotions (Mark 14:34; Luke 2:35), to the natural appetites (Rev. 18:14), to the mind (Acts 14:2; Phil. 1:27), or to the heart (Eph. 6:6). There is nothing in the word *psuchē* itself that even remotely implies a conscious entity that is able to survive the death of the body. And there is nothing in the Bible use of the word indicating that the Bible writers held any such belief.

We fully concur with the following paragraphs from a well-known British scholar, H. Wheeler Robinson, M.A., former principal of Regents Park College, London, appearing in his book, *Hebrew Psychology*:

*Nephesh* is not at all adequately rendered by "soul." Literary usage shows that there are three more or less distinct meanings covered by the word. . . . The first group relates to the principle of life, without any emphasis on what we should call its physical side. Thus the Israelite captain, threatened with destruction, says to Elijah, "Let my *nephesh* and the *nephesh* [life] of these fifty thy servants be precious in thy sight (2 Kings 1:13)."

Here the proper rendering is "life," as in the R.V., though in Jer. 38:16 the K.J.V. has "As the Lord liveth, that made us this soul" where "life" should be rendered.

There remains a second group of usages, the only one that can be called physical in the proper sense (though, for the Hebrew, "physical" includes much that we should call physiological; they simply do not distinguish the two). In this group *nephesh* denotes the human consciousness in its full extent, as in Job 16:4: "I also speak like you, if your *nephesh* were instead of my *nephesh* [soul]."

There is no reason to doubt that the primary meaning of *nephesh* was "breath," like that of the Arabic, *Nafs*—soul (*Nafas*—breath), though there is but one instance in the Old

Testament in which "breath" is the natural rendering. It is found in Job 41:19-21.

If then we ask the question, "What is man?" and try to answer it, not in the old theological, but in the new physiological fashion, we shall see, that for the Hebrew, man is a unity, and that that unity in a body is a complex of parts, drawing their life and activity from a breath-soul, which has no existence apart from the body.

The Hebrews had never thought of a disembodied soul.—Quoted by the Methodist leader, Arthur S. Peake, in *The People and the Book*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925.

In harmony with the foregoing we as Adventists believe that, in general, the Scriptures teach that the soul of man represents the whole man, and not a particular part independent of the other component parts of man's nature; and further, that the soul cannot exist apart from the body, for man is a unit.

### The Bible Definition of "Spirit"

Some Bible students, recognizing that the word "soul" as used in the Old Testament hardly supports the idea that man possesses a separate, component part that can survive the death of the body, have turned to Ecclesiastes 12:7 to support the doctrine that man has an immortal something that can exist apart from the body. This text reads, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."

The word "spirit" in this text is translated from the Hebrew word *ruach*, which has the various meanings of "breath," "wind," and "spirit." In the Old Testament, *ruach* is translated "breath" of the body 33 times, as in Ezekiel 37:5; "wind" 117 times, as in Genesis 8:1; "spirit" 76 times in the sense of vitality (Judges

15:19); “courage” (Joshua 2:11); temper or “anger” (Judges 8:3); and in reference to the disposition (Isa. 54:6). *Ruach* is also used to describe the living principle in men and animals 25 times, as in Psalm 146: 4; the seat of the emotions 3 times, as in 1 Samuel 1: 15; the “mind” 9 times, as in Ezekiel 11:5; and of the Spirit of God 94 times, as in Isaiah 63:10. In not one of the 379 instances of its use in the Old Testament does *ruach* denote that *in man* there is a separate entity capable of conscious existence apart from the physical body. In Ecclesiastes 12:7, that which returns to God, we believe, is the life principle imparted to man by God.

When we turn to the New Testament, we find that the word “spirit” is translated 2 times from the Greek word *phantasma*, and 288 times from *pneuma*. The Greek word *pneuma* is translated in the K.J.V. 288 times as “spirit,” 93 times as “ghost” (modern revisions have entirely abandoned the use of the word “ghost” in favor of “spirit,” where the word *pneuma* is being translated), 1 time as “life,” 1 time as “wind,” and 1 time as “spiritual.”

*Pneuma* is used (1) of air in motion, such as “wind” in John 3:8, and “breath” in Revelation 11:11; (2) of the principle of life, as in Luke 8:55; (3) of the frame of mind, disposition, influence, or attitudes that govern man, the basis of his character, as in 1 Corinthians 4:21; 2 Corinthians 12:18; (4) of incorporeal beings, such as angels (Heb. 1:14), demons, or evil spirits (Matt. 8:16); (5) of the Holy Spirit, as in Matthew 1:18, et cetera. There are also other shades of meaning related to the applications cited here.

There is nothing inherent in the word *pneuma* by which it may be taken to mean some supposed conscious entity of man capable of existing apart from the body, nor does the usage of the word *with respect to man* in the New Testament in any way imply such a concept.

### Is Either the Soul or the Spirit Immortal?

As far as the Bible is concerned, the word "immortal" is applied only to God: "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever" (1 Tim. 1:17). This is the only occurrence of the word in the Scriptures. Innate immortality is ascribed only to Deity: "I give thee charge in the sight of God, . . . who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality" (1 Tim. 6: 13-16). The gift of immortality is promised to man, and he is urged to seek for it (Rom. 2:7). In fact, it is promised to the faithful at the second coming of Christ: "We shall not all sleep [die], but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality" (1 Cor. 15: 51-53). In 1 Thessalonians 4:16 the apostle makes it clear that the "last trump" and the raising of the dead are at the second advent.

If man is urged to seek for immortality, it is clear that he does not now possess it. At the creation of man in the beginning, death was set before him as the sure result of disobedience: "In the day that thou eatest

thereof [the fruit of the forbidden tree] thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17). It is obvious that man was not created incapable of dying. It is equally clear from the account of the Fall that man could have lived forever if he had continued to partake of the tree of life. After Adam's sin God said, "Now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever" (Gen. 3:22). It is simple to deduce from the account of creation and of the fall of man, that God promised him eternal life on condition of obedience, and death if he disobeyed.

If it be thought that the New Testament use of such expressions as "body and soul" and "body, soul, and spirit" may indicate that man really is composed of three divisible, component parts, and that at least one of them is immortal, we must consider the following:

1. Christ declared that both soul and body can be destroyed in hell: "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matt. 10:28).

2. A careful study of all the adjectives used in Scripture to qualify the word "spirit," as applied to man, indicates that *not one* even remotely approaches the idea of immortality as one of the qualities of the human "spirit."

3. The Spirit of God is the only spirit that has the appellative "eternal" (Heb. 9:14).

Seventh-day Adventists do not believe that the whole man or any part of him is inherently immortal. We believe the Bible picture of man is of a creature subject to death, with the possibility of eternal life only

because Christ has paid the penalty for sin and offers *His life* to the repentant sinner. Jesus Christ "hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Tim. 1:10). *In Him* is our hope—our only hope.

# The Condition of Man in Death

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## QUESTION 41

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*Why do you not accept the commonly held belief that at death man goes either to heaven or to hell? This is so widely held by Christians of most denominations that it has become one of the doctrines of orthodoxy in the minds of most church leaders today.*

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The condition of man in death has intrigued Christian scholars throughout the centuries. Many illustrious leaders, back through the years, have differed with one another over this doctrine, not a few dissenting from the popular view. (See under Question 44.) Adventists have endeavored to follow what they believe to be the teaching of Sacred Scripture as to whether, at death, man goes to his reward immediately or rests in the grave awaiting the morn of the resurrection.

We, as Adventists, have reached the definite conclusion that man rests in the tomb until the resurrection morning. Then, at the first resurrection (Rev. 20: 4, 5), the resurrection of the just (Acts 24:15), the righteous come forth immortalized, at the call of Christ the Life-giver. And they then enter into life everlasting, in their eternal home in the kingdom of glory. Such is our understanding.

### I. Death as Set Forth in Scripture

In the Old Testament the term "death" refers almost exclusively to physical death. In the New Testament there are other shades of meaning, as seen in the various Greek words used. The term most frequently used is *thanatos*, which means either physical death, a carnal indifference to spiritual matters, or an insensibility to divine things. The Greek words for "sleep"—such as *koimaō*, *katheudō*, and *hupnos*—quite often rendered "sleep," refer in many instances to the sleep of death.

W. E. Vine (*Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, 1939, vol. 1, p. 81) remarks:

This metaphorical use of the word sleep is appropriate, because of the similarity in appearance between a sleeping body and a dead body.

Referring to meanings of "death" other than that of physical death, New Testament writers state that those who indulge in the pleasures of wickedness are "dead" while they live (1 Tim. 5:6); those who are outside of Christ are "dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1); those who are converted to God pass "from death unto life" (John 5:24); those who have been born again are now "dead indeed unto sin" (Rom. 6:11); and those who are truly the sons of God "shall never see death" (John 8:51).\*

### II. Condition of Man in Death

The Scriptures clearly set forth the condition of

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\*We recognize that all men, both righteous and wicked, die. But what is here meant is that the children of God will not experience the *second* death.

man in death. The following texts answer many of the questions that come to mind.

Psalm 6:5—"In death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?"

Psalm 30:9—"What profit is there . . . when I go down to the pit? Shall the dust praise thee? shall it declare thy truth?"

Psalm 88:10—"Wilt thou shew wonders to the dead? shall the dead arise and praise thee?"

Psalm 115:17—"The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence."

Psalm 146:4—"His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish."

Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6—"The dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun."

Isaiah 38:18, 19—"The grave cannot praise thee, death can not celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The living . . . shall praise thee."

1 Corinthians 15:17, 18—"If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain. . . . Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished."

### III. The Resurrection, Not Death, the Hope of the Saints

All through the apostolic letters one is impressed with the fact that the groundwork of the gospel message was that Jesus, the Messiah, *had risen from the dead*. Nowhere do the apostles refer to His soul as coming back from heaven. They distinctly mention that He was raised from the dead (Luke 24:3-6). This is iterated again and again. His soul was "not left in hell (Greek *hadēs*, "the grave"))" (Acts 2:31; Ps. 16:10, Hebrews, *sheol*, "the grave"), though He "poured out his soul unto death" (Isa. 53:12).

*The resurrection is called the hope of the Christian.* (Notice John 6:39, 40; Luke 20:37; compare Matt.

11:5; Luke 7:22.) Job declared: "I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth" (Job 19:25). And the psalmist David, expressing his hope for the future, declared, "I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness" (Ps. 17:15).

Even in the days of Jesus, when the Pharisees were questioning Him about matters pertaining to the future, they did not discuss the question of death, but rather the matter of the resurrection (Matt. 22:28-30). Paul's hope was definitely fixed on this climactic event. Writing to the Philippian church, he expressed the longing of his soul when he exclaimed, "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead" (Phil. 3:11). (See also 1 Cor. 15:18, 22, 23; 1 Thess. 4:14, 17.) In the New Testament the resurrection of the Christian is referred to as "the resurrection of life" (John 5:29), and "the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 3:21).

*Rewards are given to the saints, not at death but at the second advent.* The resurrection of the righteous takes place at the time our Saviour returns from heaven to gather His people (Matt. 16:27; Isa. 40:10; 2 Tim. 4:8; et cetera).

Another important factor is that, at death, the saints go to the grave. They will live again, but they come to life and live with Jesus after they are raised from the dead. While asleep in the tomb the child of God knows nothing. Time matters not to him. If he should be there a thousand years, the time would be to him as but a moment. One who serves God closes his eyes in death, and whether one day or two thousand years elapse,

the next instant in his consciousness will be when he opens his eyes and beholds his blessed Lord. To him it is death—then sudden glory.

#### IV. The First and Second Deaths

While the expression “the first death” does not appear in the Bible, the term “the second death” is used (Rev. 2:11; 20:6, 14; 21:8). This *second* death is associated with the final punishment of the wicked, and really indicates a death from which there is no resurrection. The first death is obviously the death resulting from Adam’s transgression. From this first death, or sleep, there is to be a resurrection for all mankind. This applies to all, whether righteous or wicked, as the Scriptures clearly declare that there will be a “resurrection of the dead both of the just and unjust” (Acts 24:15). Albert Barnes (on John 11:11) well remarks:

In the Scriptures it [sleep] is used to intimate that death will not be *final*: that there will be an awakening out of this sleep, or a resurrection. It is a beautiful and tender expression, removing all that is dreadful in death, and filling the mind with the idea of calm repose after a life of toil, with a reference to a future resurrection in increased vigor and renovated powers.

#### V. Some Have Returned From the Grave

If, at death, a conscious soul or spirit immediately leaves the body for either heaven or hell, then what about those who died and were raised from the dead? Did they have anything to tell us? There are at least seven instances of those who were raised from the dead: The widow’s son (1 Kings 17); the Shunammite’s son (2 Kings 4); the widow’s son at Nain (Luke 7:11-15);

the daughter of Jairus (Luke 8:41, 42, 49-56); Tabitha (Acts 9:36-41); Eutychus (Acts 20:9-12); and Lazarus (John 11:1-44; 12:1, 9).

Doubtless some of these were dead for but a short time, for according to Jewish custom, burial took place on the day of death. (See A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures*, on John 12.) Lazarus had been dead longer, however—"four days," according to Martha.

The question that naturally arises is this: Did the souls of these individuals go immediately at death to either heaven or hell? If so, it would surely be too bad to bring one back from heaven, where, having once arrived, he would naturally expect to remain forever. To bring one back from the realms of bliss to this vale of tears would be to run a risk of his sinning again, and so of losing his eternal reward. On the other hand, if one were brought back from hell, as popularly conceived, he would doubtless be very glad to be released from punishment and would have another opportunity of accepting the gospel of the grace of God.

If the soul goes to either heaven or hell at death, surely those who have been resurrected would talk of the glories of the heavenly land, or they would warn sinners in no uncertain tones of the torments of the damned. Yet there is no record of their having said a single word. How strange, if the soul or spirit survives death as a conscious entity, that we have no word at all from any of the aforementioned individuals concerning what happened during the period they were dead!

An excellent statement appears in the W. Robertson Nichol's *Expositor's Bible* on this question:

What was the experience of Lazarus during these four days? To speculate on what he saw or heard or experienced, to trace the flight of his soul through the gates of death to the presence of God, may perhaps seem to some as foolish as to go with those curious Jews who flocked out to Bethany to set eyes on this marvel, a man who had passed to the unseen world and yet returned. But although no doubt good and great purposes are served by the obscurity that involves death, our endeavour to penetrate the gloom, and catch some glimpses of a life we must shortly enter, cannot be judged altogether idle. Unfortunately, it is little we can learn from Lazarus.—Volume 1, on John, p. 360.

The probability is, he had nothing to reveal. As Jesus said, He came “to awake him out of sleep.” Had he learned anything of the spirit world, it must have oozed out. The burden of a secret which all men craved to know, and which the scribes and lawyers from Jerusalem would do all in their power to elicit from him, would have damaged his mind and oppressed his life. His rising would be as the awaking of a man from deep sleep, scarcely knowing what he was doing, tripping and stumbling in the grave-clothes and wondering at the crowd. What Mary and Martha would prize would be the unchanged love that shone in his face as he recognized them, the same familiar tones and endearments,—all that showed how little change death brings, how little rupture of affection or of any good thing, how truly he was their own brother still.—*Ibid.*, p. 362.

Mention might well be made of one of the saints of ancient days. He died, in the regular course of events, and was buried as were his fathers before him. The divine record says: “David . . . is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day” (Acts 2:29). To say that it was David’s body that was buried, and that his soul went to the realms of bliss, would certainly not be in accordance with the teaching of the Word of God. This might accord with popular theology, but the Divine Word definitely declares that “David never went up to heaven” (verse 34, Knox translation),

or "did not ascend into the heavens" (R.S.V.; compare Weymouth, et cetera). And the Cambridge Bible has the following note: "*For David is not ascended. Better ascended not.* He went down to the grave, and 'slept with his fathers.'

#### VI. Departing, and Being With Christ

Quite frequently, when we present the considerations advanced here, the words of the apostle Paul are referred to in regard to departing, and being with Christ. If the saints do not go to heaven at death, what does the great apostle mean when, speaking of himself, he says specifically that he has "a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better" (Phil. 1:23)? Of course it will be better to be with Christ. But why, it must be asked, should we conclude from this remark that the apostle expects, immediately upon death, to go at once into the presence of Christ? The Bible does not say so. It merely states his desire to depart, and to be with Christ.

One might reason that the *implication* is to the effect that being with Christ would be immediately on his departure. But it must be admitted that such is not a necessary implication, and it certainly is not a definite statement of the text. In this particular passage Paul does not tell us *when* he will be with his Lord. In other places he uses an expression similar to one in this passage. For instance, he says, "The time of my departure is at hand" (2 Tim. 4:6). The Greek word used in these two texts, *analuō*, is not used very often in the Greek New Testament, but the word has the meaning "to be loosened like an anchor." It is a metaphor drawn

from the loosened moorings preparatory to setting sail. (Compare W. E. Vine, *Expository Dictionary*, vol. 1, pp. 294, 295.)

It should be observed that Paul does not tell us that it is his soul or his spirit that will depart. He merely says "*I*" have a desire; the time of "my" departure is at hand. That is the way anyone would express himself if he were leaving for a journey. When the time of leaving comes, *he* departs, and *the whole person* goes. There is no separation of body and soul. Why should this concept be changed as soon as we think of death?

There is a time when Paul could go to be with his Lord as a whole man—body, soul, and spirit—and that is at the time of the coming of the Lord. This he stresses in 1 Thessalonians 5:23. Then—body, soul, and spirit—he, and all the redeemed, shall either rise from their graves to meet Christ, or if living be translated and caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. This will be at the time of His glorious second appearing for His saints. This is the concept we hold, and we believe it is in full harmony with the teaching of Holy Writ.

#### VII. Absent From the Body—Present With the Lord

There is another expression, in 2 Corinthians 5:8, that is often used in considering this subject. The statement of the apostle is, "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." It must be recognized that there is nothing in this text to justify our coming to the conclusion that the being "present with the Lord" will occur immediately upon being "absent from the body."

The text does not indicate *when* these experiences take place. We simply recognize the interval of death between the two experiences. This is just as logical as to believe that one immediately follows the other—and even more so, in the light of what the same apostle has taught concerning the resurrection at the second coming of our Lord. Let us observe the entire passage and note its obvious teachings.

1. **REFERENCE TO THE EARTHLY HOUSE.**—Evidently making reference to the body, Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 5:1 of the “earthly house.” Then he continues, in verse 2, stating that “in this we groan.” Again referring to the earthly house, he calls it “this tabernacle” (verse 4). He states in verse 6 that while we are absent from the Lord, “we are at home in the body.”

2. **REFERENCE TO THE HEAVENLY HOUSE.**—Making reference to the future state, Paul speaks of a “building of God . . . eternal in the heavens” (verse 1), and says that this is “our house which is from heaven” (verse 2). When the change takes place and we put on immortality, he remarks that it is in order that “mortality might be swallowed up of life” (verse 4). Then it is at the resurrection, it seems to us, that Paul expected to be “present with the Lord” (verse 8), for he says in 1 Corinthians 15:53 that at the second coming of Christ “this mortal must put on immortality.”

3. **REFERENCE TO THE INTERVENING PERIOD.**—That the apostle Paul has in mind an intervening period between the experience of being in the “earthly house” and that of putting on the “house which is from heaven,” is evident from what he mentions in the same passage. Note his remarks: We do not wish to “be found

naked" (2 Cor. 5:3); we are not desirous of being "unclothed" (verse 4). This intervening period we believe to be the state of death. What we really desire is "to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven" (verse 2; compare verse 4).

It is in this connection that he declares that mortality is to be "swallowed up of life" (verse 4). Thus the whole passage, when carefully considered, makes clear what the apostle has in mind. He is thinking, not of death, but of the resurrection day, when "this mortal must put on immortality" and "this corruptible must put on incorruption" (1 Cor. 15:53).

This reveals the importance of a careful study of the context in order to arrive at a sound exegesis of a passage of Scripture.

### VIII. An Appropriate Word of Caution

Every precaution was taken by our beneficent Creator in the beginning that there should not be an immortal sinner. Man was given free access to the tree of life. But when he sinned, that continuing access was denied him. No longer could he pluck its wonderful fruit. He was barred from the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:24). And why? "Lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever" (verse 22). Hence, it is evident that God never intended there should be an immortal sinner. *Immortality is promised to sinful men only on condition that they have been saved by grace and live in fellowship with God.*

Satan, on the other hand, is the responsible author of the doctrine that the sinner will live forever. We find him announcing this to Eve at the time of the Fall. God

had said, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. 2:17). The devil, however, flatly contradicted God, and said, "Ye shall not surely die" (Gen. 3:4). In the Hebrew this is actually stronger, and might be read: "It is certain ye shall not die."

Matthew Henry, in commenting upon this, pointedly remarks: "This was a lie, a downright lie; for . . . it was contrary to the word of God." Unfortunately this teaching that the sinner will not die—in other words, that he will live forever, irrespective of his character—clearly has its origin with him who is "a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:44). The Saviour said not only that the evil one is "a liar," but that he was "a murderer from the beginning." He evidently had reference to the experience just noted.

Another caution needs to be observed. In speaking for God, we must be careful that we do not give the sinner the impression that he may obtain eternal life without turning to God, repenting of his sins, and becoming a new creature in Christ Jesus. Eternal life is a gift from God (Rom. 6:23; 1 John 5:12).

Years ago the prophet Ezekiel referred to some in his day, men who were false prophets, who were out to deceive the people. These deceivers, said Ezekiel, promise life to the sinner even though he continues in his iniquity (Eze. 13:22). We thank God that the Christian can go to a world perishing in sin, and carry the wonderful offer of life and salvation through Christ our blessed Lord. We can proclaim with full assurance that if men accept Him, turn to God, and are born again, they may have "everlasting life." This is the message of John 3:16: "Whosoever believeth in him

should not perish, but have everlasting life." This is a remarkable offer, but we are also ever to remember that those who believe not the Son "shall not see life" (John 3:36).

# The Punishment of the Wicked

## QUESTION 42

*What Biblical reasons have you for teaching that the wicked will not suffer conscious punishment throughout eternity? As you know, the majority of Christian bodies today, believing that the soul of man is immortal, teach that the punishment of the ungodly will be conscious torment in hell throughout all eternity. Kindly state the reasons for your belief.*

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Everlasting bliss for the righteous, and eternal punishment for the ungodly, are plainly taught in the Scriptures. That God should reward His people with eternal life, and mete out just retribution to the wicked for their evil deeds, appears to most men as reasonable and equitable, and in harmony with both the love and the justice of God.

In certain scriptures we are given glimpses of the glory land, and are able, at least to some extent, to form an idea of what heaven will be like. However, no matter how glorious the picture may appear to be, it will still be true that "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" (1 Cor. 2:9).

The fate of the unrighteous is likewise emphasized in many places in Holy Writ. There will surely be punishment, according to the Word, and there will also be degrees of punishment. And this punishment, moreover, will not be remedial, but punitive and final.

### I. Punishment Yet Future, Not Now Going On

It is commonly believed that at death the righteous go immediately to heaven, and the wicked forthwith to hell, where they are punished. There are persons, however, who believe that the wicked are punished in this life for their sins. They argue that when a man is cast into prison, or perhaps is executed on the gallows, he is then suffering punishment for his iniquities. In a way this is true, but not strictly so. That he thus suffers, there can be no doubt, but such suffering is not primarily the penalty for his *sins*. He suffers in this life the penalty for his *crimes*. The state punishes for infraction of human laws, but its punishments are meted out for crimes, not sins. Sin is infringement of the divine law, the Decalogue, the commandments of God. And God will be the judge, and will mete out punishment according to His justice.

It is, of course, true that in this life men may lose their health because of wrong habits of living. Men may drink to excess and not only suffer all kinds of sickness but also incur premature death. But these consequences do not constitute actual punishment for sin. They are the physical results of wrongdoing. Punishment for sin, as such, will finally be meted out when the wicked stand before the bar of God and receive the just rewards of their deeds.

Neither evil angels nor wicked men are *now* receiving final punishment for their transgressions. Such punishments are still future. In the days when Jesus was on earth, the devils asked Him, "Art thou come hither to torment us *before* the time?" (Matt. 8:29). Evil angels are "*reserved unto judgment*" (2 Peter 2:4), or "*unto the judgment of the great day*" (Jude 6). Concerning the wicked we read that God reserves "*the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished*" (2 Peter 2:9).

## II. What Constitutes the Punishment of the Wicked?

The only safe and reliable source of information on this question is, of course, the Word of God. No dictums from tradition, from the writings of heathen authors, or even from the apocryphal writings of either the Hebrews or the early Christians, whether expressed in prose or in verse, should influence us in this matter. Unless the contentions expressed are based upon the authoritative Word of God they should have no weight with us. We therefore note some of the expressions used by the Lord in this connection. We read that as the final penalty for their transgressions and their rejection of the Son of God—

1. **THE WICKED WILL DIE.**—On more than one occasion we are told that "the soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Eze. 18:4). But some may say, "That is in the Old Testament." True; but is not the Old Testament as much the Word of God as is the New? The fact is that the same truth is taught in the New Testament, for we read, "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23).

And in this verse a unique contrast is drawn. *Life* is promised to the righteous; *death* to the unrighteous.

Over and over again death is emphasized as the punishment of the wicked. Sinners are declared "worthy of death" (Rom. 1:32); the end of sin is death (Rom. 6:21); and "sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death" (James 1:15). In ancient days God in His love and mercy pleaded with Israel through His servants the prophets. Time after time His appeal was, "Why will ye die, O house of Israel? . . . I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth" (Eze. 18:31, 32).

2. THE WICKED WILL BE CUT OFF.—This thought is emphasized repeatedly, especially in the Old Testament. The psalmist, looking forward to the time when sin would be abolished, declares, "Evildoers shall be cut off" (Ps. 37:9); and again, "The wicked are cut off" (verse 34). The words "cut off" are, in the main, rendered from the Hebrew word *karath*. This is a strong word, and is several times translated "destroy," as in Ezekiel 28:16.

3. THE WICKED WILL PERISH.—This expression is repeatedly used in relation to the destruction of the wicked hosts. The word "perish" is translated from the Hebrew *abad*, and means "to be cut off" or "to be cut down." It will be observed in the following texts: "The wicked shall *perish*" (Ps. 37:20); "The wicked *perish* at the presence of God" (Ps. 68:2). Another significant expression occurs in Psalm 37:10, where we read, "The wicked *shall not be*." This is paralleled in the New Testament by our Lord's statement that "who-soever believeth in him should not perish" (John 3:16).

4. THE WICKED WILL BE BURNED UP.—This also is a strong expression, and is used on many occasions. Malachi speaks of the day when the wicked shall be burned up (Mal. 4:1). Matthew writes of their being bound “in bundles to burn them” (Matt. 13:30), and mentions also that “the tares are gathered and burned” (verse 40). Peter declares that “the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up” (2 Peter 3:10). We read of the final destination of the unrighteous as being in “the lake of fire” (Rev. 20:15), and this the revelator calls “the second death” (Rev. 21:8).

5. THE WICKED SHALL BE DESTROYED.—This thought occurs in a number of instances. “All the wicked will be destroyed” (Ps. 145:20). Evil angels once declared, in the presence of Jesus, “Art thou come to destroy us?” (Mark 1:24). Again, the wicked will be “punished with everlasting destruction” (2 Thess. 1:9); and even the devil himself, the one who introduced iniquity into our fair world, will be destroyed (Heb. 2:14).

Some of the strongest words, it seems, were used by the sacred writers to emphasize the fate of the wicked. They will not only burn, Greek, *kaiō* (Rev. 19:20; 21:8), but they shall be burned up, Greek, *katakaiō* (2 Peter 3:10; Matt. 3:12). They shall not only be destroyed, *apolumi* (Matt. 21:41; Mark 1:24), but be “utterly destroyed,” *exolothreuō* (Acts 3:23, R.V.). They shall not only be “consumed,” *tamam* (Ps. 104:35) and “consume away,” *kalah* (Ps. 37:20), but be “utterly consumed,” *apolumi* (Ps. 73:19; LXX 72:19).

**III. Figures and Similes Illustrate Fate of Wicked**

Not only in language clear and plain does the Lord reveal to man the fate of the ungodly, but He has sought to bring this truth home to us in familiar illustrations, figures of speech, and various similes. Observe:

**I. THE WICKED ARE LIKENED TO COMBUSTIBLE MATERIALS.**—The psalmist likens the wicked to something he saw repeatedly in the Temple of ancient days—“The enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs” (Ps. 37:20). Furthermore, the ungodly are likened to “the chaff which the wind driveth away” (Ps. 1:4). Isaiah says that “the whirlwind shall take them away as stubble” (Isa. 40:24). And Malachi also declared that in that day the wicked “shall be stubble” (Mal. 4:1).

**2. OVERTHROW OF SODOM AND GOMORRAH IS TYPE OF DESTRUCTION OF WICKED.**—The fate of Sodom and Gomorrah, in days of old, is graphically described in the Biblical record. We read that they were overthrown (Deut. 29:23; Isa. 13:19), and that the cities were destroyed (Gen. 19:29). The destruction was complete, for we read that the fire “destroyed them all” (Luke 17:29).

The punishment meted out to Sodom and Gomorrah was not of long duration, for we read that they were “overthrown as in a moment” (Lam. 4:6). Furthermore, another Biblical writer tells us how utterly they were overthrown—they were turned “into ashes” (2 Peter 2:6). And Peter further declares that this experience was “an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly.” Jude added a unique expression, which indicates that the destruction was not only complete but

it was “the vengeance of eternal fire” (Jude 7). This could not mean fire that would be eternally burning, for the cities are not burning today. Rather, this fire would be eternal in its *results*.

#### IV. The Terms “Everlasting” and “Eternal”

These words are not used in the Old Testament in relation to the fate of the wicked; they are found, however, in the New Testament in the following texts: “Depart . . . ye cursed, into *everlasting fire*” (Matt. 25:41); “and these shall go away into *everlasting punishment*” (Matt. 25:46); “punished with *everlasting destruction*” (2 Thess. 1:9); “in danger of *eternal damnation*” (Mark 3:29); “suffering the vengeance of *eternal fire*” (Jude 7). In each instance, whether translated “everlasting” or “eternal,” the words are from the Greek *aiōnios*. For instance, in Matthew 25:46, the “everlasting” (*aiōnios*) punishment is contrasted with “eternal” (*aiōnios*) life in the same verse.

In view of this, it might be observed that if the “eternal life” referred to is forever and ever, will not the “everlasting punishment” be for the same duration, inasmuch as precisely the same Greek word is used in both instances? Decidedly so! The eternal life will continue throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity; and the punishment will also be eternal—not eternal duration of conscious suffering, however, but punishment that is complete and final. The end of those who thus suffer is the second death. This death will be eternal, from which there will not, and cannot, be any resurrection.

That this is so, can be seen in the use of the word “eternal” in other relationships. We read of eternal

redemption (Heb. 9:12) and of eternal judgment (Heb. 6:2). Surely this does not mean redemption going on through all eternity, or an unending work of judgment. No! The work of redemption is complete and eternal in its results. The same will be true of the judgment. The same principle applies concerning “eternal damnation” (Mark 3:29), “eternal fire” (Jude 7), “eternal punishment” (Matt. 25:46, R.S.V.).

Let us repeat: In the expression “eternal punishment,” just as in “eternal redemption” and “eternal judgment,” the Bible is referring to all eternity—not as of *process*, but as of *result*. It is not an endless process of punishment, but an effectual punishment, which will be final and forever (*aiōnios*).\*

#### V. The Expressions “Forever” and “Forever and Ever”

These expressions are found many times in Holy Scripture. In the Old Testament they are in the main from the Hebrew *olam*, which is translated quite often by the word “everlasting.” It does have several other renderings, however, such as “ancient time,” “old time,” “beginning of the world,” et cetera.

Another expression in the Hebrew is *netsach* (“forever”), and *lenetsach netsachim* (“forever and ever”). *Netsach* is variously rendered as “always,” “constantly,” “ever,” “evermore,” and “perpetually.”

In the New Testament the words “for ever,” et

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\*Scholars, discussing the Greek words *aiōn* or *aiōnios*, tell us:

“The word *aiōn* can be used of a man’s lifetime, as when Paul contemplates eating ‘no flesh for evermore’ (1 Cor. 8:13).”—ALAN RICHARDSON, *A Theological Word Book of the Bible*, 1950, art. “Time,” p. 266. (The K.J.V. reads, “. . . while the world standeth.”)

“Describes duration . . . not endless.”—W. E. VINE, *Dictionary of New Testament Words*, on “Eternal.”

cetera, came from the Greek *eis tous aiōnas tōn aiōnion*, literally, “to the ages of the ages,” and is uniformly rendered “for ever and ever.”

It must be recognized that these words are used at times with limitations, and the only way to understand them is in the light of the context. If they are applied to God, as they are on so many occasions, the meaning is obvious; but if to man, they can apply only *as long as he lives*. In other words, the term must be understood according to the object to which it is applied. That this is recognized by scholars will be seen in the following comments on the Hebrew word *olam*:

It more often refers to *future time*, in such a manner, that what is called the *terminus ad quem*, is always defined from the nature of the thing itself. When it is applied to human affairs, and specially . . . to individual men, it commonly signifies *all the days of life*.—*GESENIUS*, on *Olam*, in *Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon of the Old Testament Scriptures* (1846), S. P. Tregelles, tr.

*for ever*] i.e. till his life's end: cf. “for ever” in 1 S. i. 22, and esp. in the expression, “servant for ever,” xxvii. 12, Job xli. 4 [xl. 28 Heb.]—*Cambridge Bible*, on Ex. 21:6.

The limitation in the use of these terms will be seen by the following: The Passover was to be observed *forever* (Ex. 12:17), the slave to serve his master *forever* (Ex. 21:6), the child Samuel to abide in the tabernacle *forever* (1 Sam. 1:22), Jonah to be in the belly of the great fish *forever* (Jonah 2:6), and leprosy to cleave to Gehazi and his seed *forever* (2 Kings 5:27).

Clarke, in his *Commentary*, has well said:

Some have thought, because of the prophet's curse, *The leprosy of Naaman shall cleave unto thee and thy seed for ever*, that there are persons still alive who are this man's real descendants, and afflicted with this horrible disease. Mr. Maundrell when he was in Judea made diligent inquiry concerning this, but could not ascertain the truth of the supposition. To me it

appears absurd; the denunciation took place in the posterity of Gehazi till it should become extinct, and under the influence of this disorder this must *soon* have taken place. The *for ever* implies as long as any of his posterity should remain. This is the import of the word, *leolam*. It takes in the whole extent or duration of the thing to which it is applied. The *for ever* of Gehazi was till his posterity became extinct.

We find that the same limitation in meaning applies in the New Testament also, to the Greek words *aiōn* and *aiōnios*—Philemon was counseled to receive Onesimus “for ever” (Philemon 15).

The Apocalypse also declares, concerning Babylon, that “her smoke rose up *for ever and ever*” (Rev. 19:3); that the wicked “shall be tormented day and night *for ever and ever*” (Rev. 20:10); and that “the smoke of their torment ascended up *for ever and ever*” (Rev. 14:11). These are strong expressions, and can be rightly understood only in the light of Biblical usage. A good illustration of this appears in Isa. 34:8-10:

For it is the day of the Lord's vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion. And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever: from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever.

This had a local application in days of long ago; and undoubtedly it will have a second application in the great conflagration of the last days. But think of its application in the days of Israel. What a picture of absolute destruction—brimstone and burning pitch, burning so fiercely it could not be quenched! The smoke ascended, and the divine record is that it ascended “*for ever*.” But note that this unquenchable fire

ended in waste and desolation. Who would contend that the fire is still burning? What we behold here is a picture of absolute, complete destruction. So shall it be in the day of the executive judgment, when the wicked are destroyed. "They shall be destroyed for ever" (Ps. 92:7).

## VI. Reasons for Rejecting Eternal Torment

We reject the doctrine of eternal torment for the following major reasons:

1. Because everlasting life is a gift of God (Rom. 6:23). The wicked do not possess this—they "shall not see life" (John 3:36); "no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him" (1 John 3:15).

2. Because eternal torment would perpetuate and immortalize sin, suffering, and woe, and contradict, we believe, divine revelation, which envisions the time when these things shall be no more (Rev. 21:4).

3. Because it seems to us to provide a plague spot in the universe of God throughout eternity, and would seem to indicate that it is impossible for God Himself ever to abolish it.

4. Because in our thinking, it would detract from the attribute of love as seen in the character of God, and postulates the concept of a wrath which is never appeased.

5. Because the Scriptures teach that the atoning work of Christ is to "put away sin" (Heb. 9:26)—first from the individual, and ultimately from the universe. The full fruition of Christ's sacrificial, atoning work will be seen not only in a redeemed people but in a restored heaven and earth (Eph. 1:14).

# The Rich Man and Lazarus

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## QUESTION 43

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*Believing, as Adventists do, in the unconsciousness of man in death, how do you explain our Lord's statement concerning the rich man and Lazarus? If this does not teach that men enter into their rewards at death, then what does it teach? What is the purpose of the story? Please state your position.*

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Theological comment concerning the story of the rich man and Lazarus has differed throughout the centuries, with scholars of eminence and piety on both sides of the question. The majority, however, seem to have regarded the story as a parable, while some have maintained it to be historical narrative. Adventists, for numerous reasons, believe it to be a parable.

The word "parable" comes from the Greek *parabolē*, which means "to place beside," or "to draw up alongside." Jesus used parables to unfold great truths. He placed a simple story alongside a profound truth, and the profound was illumined by the simple.

### I. Setting and Intent of the Parable

The story of the rich man and Lazarus is one of a group of parables addressed particularly to the Phari-

sees, although "publicans and sinners" were also present. The fact that Jesus talked with outcasts and sinners drew sharp censure from the scribes and Pharisees. They murmured, saying, "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them" (Luke 15:2). Their attitude became the occasion for a group of moving stories, one of which is the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. The first of these is the story of the lost sheep, followed by that of the lost coin, next of the lost son, and then of the unjust steward.

While each of these stories emphasizes vital points of our Lord's gospel, the underlying lesson of each is the same. Coming to the climax of the story of the lost sheep, our Lord says, "Even so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance" (Luke 15:7, R.S.V.). One cannot fail to see the satire in His reference to the "ninety-nine righteous persons." He emphasizes the same thought at the conclusion of the story of the lost coin, and the same in the story of the lost son. In all, there was rejoicing over the recovery of that which was lost. The truth of His words was grasped by both Pharisees and multitude, but the Pharisees resisted His message.

In His effort to unfold His message of love, Jesus illustrated the kingdom of God in many ways. More than one hundred times in the Gospels we find the expression "the kingdom of God," or the "kingdom of heaven," and always Jesus impressed the thought that His kingdom is filled with joy and rejoicing. But these Pharisees, surrounded as they were by stultifying rules, regulations, and traditions, found no place in

their religion for joy—least of all for the recovery of the lost. In fact, their pride separated them from those who should have been the objects of compassion.

So, to bring the lesson of the kingdom home to these self-righteous men, Jesus spoke the parable of the unjust steward. He told of a certain rich man who had a steward. The steward had wasted his master's goods and was called to account therefor. Unjust as this man was, he took a course of action that was likewise uncommendable. He was looking out for his future, and so in an effort to ingratiate himself with those he had served, he went to them one by one and bargained with them.

To those who owed his master money, he suggested this method of settlement: If one owed his master a hundred measures of wheat, the steward counseled the debtor to write eighty. If the debt was one hundred measures of oil, the debtor was counseled to write fifty. This was, of course, dishonest and wrong. But being a shrewd man, he was building friendships for the future. No one would contend that in this parable Jesus was condoning the steward's dishonesty and trickery. He was, however, drawing a vital lesson from this man's shrewdness. Even a wicked man makes provision for his earthly future; how much more important that the child of God take account of the life to come! Then the Master Teacher adds, "The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light" (Luke 16:8).

These lessons were not welcomed by the Pharisees, for they "were covetous," and when they heard these things "they derided him" (Luke 16:14). That is, they

sought to bring Jesus' teachings into contempt. Their actions drew a stern rebuke from our Lord: "Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God" (verse 15). It was in this setting that Jesus uttered one of the most illuminating statements in all of His teachings. He said: "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." Weymouth puts it, "All classes have been forcing their way into it" (verse 16).

The gospel of Christ is as wide as the world, and in His kingdom everyone may find a welcome, irrespective of his social position, education, nationality, or financial standing. How different from the teachings of the scribes and Pharisees! They contended that poverty was the evidence of the curse of God, while riches were a passport to glory. Our Lord's message found ready response among the multitudes, especially among those whom the Pharisees despised. We read, "The common people heard him gladly" (Mark 12: 37). People of all ranks—the downtrodden members of society as well as many of the more privileged—were pressing into the kingdom. But the Pharisees, by their very attitude toward the great Teacher and toward those who believed His message, were actually shutting themselves out of the kingdom.

To such Jesus said: "But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you shut the kingdom of heaven against men; for ye neither enter yourselves, nor allow those who would enter to go in" (Matt. 23:13, R.S.V.). And again, "The publicans and

the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you" (Matt. 21:31). Outcasts, without a knowledge of the law and the prophets, were pressing into the kingdom, but those who knew the Sacred Writings—knew every jot and tittle of them—were refusing the good news of salvation.

Jesus, in His parables, denounced the selfishness and avarice so rampant among the religionists of that day. The Pharisees were covetous, and covetousness springs from base selfishness. It springs from a determination to obtain something at the expense of others. It lowers and enslaves the soul. It destroys the judgment and leads men into wrong and mischievous courses of action. To feign righteousness in order to accomplish wicked ends is diabolical in the extreme.

But that is just what these men were doing. They were proud and covetous, yet eager to justify themselves before men. At the same time, they derided the greatest Teacher of all time. They had the law of God in their hands, but the law of sin was in their hearts. They were perfectly familiar with the jots and tittles of the written Word, but they did not know the living Word, the Author of all truth. In spite of their external piety, they were actually rejecting the Holy One of God. Their religion was all on the outside, and their attitude drew from our Lord these scathing rebukes. Instead of religion being a joy, they turned it into a burden. Instead of recognizing the kingdom as being available to all, they made it an exclusive inheritance for a favored few.

With all their professed piety these same teachers were exceedingly lax on the matter of morals. Divorce

was sanctioned by the rabbis for the most insignificant causes. Hillel, the grandfather of Gamaliel, taught that a man might divorce his wife for such trifling things as burning the dinner, or even oversalting the soup. (See *Talmud Gittin* 90<sup>a</sup>). The Pharisees' flagrant violations of the eternal principles of the great moral law led our Lord to say: "It is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail. Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery" (Luke 16:17, 18).

When Jesus spoke these words He was nearing the end of His public ministry. The Saviour was making His last appeals. Before Him were publicans and sinners, Pharisees and the multitude. How He longed that all might come to Him and find salvation! The particular purpose of this group of parables was to show that the kingdom of which He spoke was more than form and ceremony; it was a fellowship with God and man.

In the story of the lost sheep the shepherd's love is beautifully illustrated, while the woman's diligent search for the piece of silver pressed home the lesson that what was lost was of real value. But no story is so moving as that of the prodigal son, for there we see the fatherly love of God. And the climax of each is similar—there was great rejoicing over the recovery of that which was lost. The story of the unjust steward, while more difficult to understand, brought home a great lesson to the Pharisees particularly, for many of them were keen businessmen.

But now the Master presses home another great truth—the necessity of being ready for the day of death. To teach this lesson He told the now-familiar tale of the rich man and Lazarus, the purpose of which was to emphasize the vital truth that riches, instead of leading a man into everlasting habitations with the saved, may indeed prove a barrier against salvation.

Most commentators agree that this rather unique parable of the rich man and Lazarus logically belongs where it is, following the story of the unjust steward. Our Lord's description of the rich man was told with rare skill. There is no indication of anything blame-worthy in his outward life. He is not depicted as voluptuous, unjust, or debauched. He was wealthy and lived in a beautiful home. Moreover, he was tolerant, for he even permitted Lazarus to beg at his gate. This rich man's place, in the social concept of the Pharisees, was assured. As a son of Abraham, the rich man had doubtless taken particular pride in his lineage. But when his life account closed, a great gulf separated him from Abraham—a gulf that was impassable. Jesus showed that his whole life had been lived in false security. Being a son of Abraham, the man naturally thought of himself as being in the kingdom of God. But Jesus revealed the fact that not only was he outside the everlasting kingdom, but he was outside forever. That is the point of the parable.

## II. An Analysis of the Parable

1. THE PREDICAMENT OF A LITERAL INTERPRETATION.—The scene of the parable is laid in *hadēs*, the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew *sheol*. The story is

often cited to prove the popular concept of the innate immortality of the soul. Such proponents contend that it gives an authoritative glimpse into the future life, provided by Christ Himself, and lifts the veil of the unseen world.\*

We will now note some of the problems that confront those who hold this view. In this portrayal, both the rich man and Lazarus had died, with the rich man buried on earth with appropriate ceremonies. Although nothing is said about an intangible, immortal soul leaving the body at death, these two characters are often regarded as disembodied spirits—two ghosts, feeling their respective ghostly misery and joy, with words issuing from their lips.

The rich man (frequently called Dives, from the Latin adjective for “rich”), in torment, is depicted in the story as seeing Lazarus afar off in “Abraham’s bosom”—a common concept—and beseeching Abraham to send Lazarus to relieve the torment of the rich man with a drop of water to cool his tongue. But, in response, he is reminded of the impassable gulf fixed between them.

That is the picture—the gulf between heaven and hell realistically too wide for persons on opposite sides to cross over, but narrow enough to permit them to converse. Now, if this portrayal is literal, then the abodes of the saved and of the damned are forever within sight and sound of each other, yet the space

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\*Thus Pool (comment on Luke 16:22) insists it teaches the existence of the soul separate from the body, with the souls of the good and evil having passed on to the state of eternal blessedness or endless woe. Van Oosterzee (*Commentary*) likewise maintains it teaches that the life of both the godly and the ungodly is uninterruptedly continued after death—death thus being identical with the afterlife.

between them is unbridgeable. It was that concept that gave rise to Jonathan Edwards' strange contention that the sight of the agonies of the damned enhances the bliss of the redeemed!

It must not be overlooked that Lazarus was carried to "Abraham's bosom," not into the presence of God. (See Part III.) Abraham is here the chief personage—and each of the characters is portrayed as without a prior resurrection. But this concept results in a maze of absurdities and contradictions. It creates a confused jumble of the literal and the figurative, and does violence to the plain declarations of Scripture.

2. NARRATIVE—LITERAL PARABLE, OR ALLEGORY?—The parable was a common method employed by Christ in teaching truth. And the laws, or principles, of parables, familiar in Christ's day, were a sufficient safeguard against misunderstanding. This particular parable, unique in the New Testament, has its nearest parallel in the Old Testament, in the parabolic imagery of Isaiah 14:9-11, which represents dead kings, though actually in their graves, rising up and sitting on thrones in *sheol* (equivalent of the Greek, *hadēs*), conversing and rejoicing over the mighty Babylonian conqueror who had put them to death, and who himself has now been conquered by death and is coming to take his throne among them in the nether regions.

Hell [margin, "the grave"] from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. All they shall speak and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we? art thou become like unto us? Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the

noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee.

Jotham's parabolic story of the trees, the vine, and the bramble engaging in a political discussion is another parallel in the Old Testament. The episode never took place in reality. But that in no way detracts from the truth emphasized in parabolic form.

This parable pictures inanimate objects personified, and even given life and speech. In Judges 9:8-15 we read, "The trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them; and they said . . ." Anyone will recognize this as clearly figurative language. Parables are often akin to fables, or fictitious narratives. In our concept of death, dead men holding rational discussion is like the trees holding political discourse. In a parable, then, there is often substantial truth in the framework of the circumstantial fiction.

In this parable of Luke 16, *hadēs* is figuratively portrayed as a place of life, of memory, and of speech. And the dead in *hadēs* are pictured as alive, and seeking to give admonition to the living. It is an intriguing story, but to us it is clearly figurative. In the story those actually dead are made to speak and act, which is permissible in a parable, for in a parable all the incongruities of time, place, distance, et cetera, vanish. In this allegory, references to the gulf, the flaming fire, and the dead speaking are all understandable, for the story is told to convey a moral truth. This is the point and purpose of the recital, though the dead are not actually conscious living beings, nor are the rewards and punishment meted out as yet.

### 3. CANNOT BE BOTH LITERAL AND FIGURATIVE.—

All admit that either the story must be literal fact, and the narrative an actual occurrence, or it is merely a parable. It cannot be both. If literal, it must be equally true in fact and consistent in detail. But if a parable, then only the moral truth to be conveyed is to be sought. And the story would then be subject to the recognized laws and limitations of the parable. Thus all is understandable. As we see it, the literal application is clearly incongruous, and breaks down under the weight of its own absurdities. Christ is not here disclosing particulars of life beyond the grave. Rather, He is employing a trenchant story of the times to admonish and rebuke those who refused His teachings on the right use of wealth.

Contenders for literalism suppose Dives and Lazarus to be in a *disembodied* state, that is, destitute of bodies. And yet the rich man is explicitly referred to as having "eyes" that see, and a "tongue" that speaks, as well as seeking cooling relief from the "finger" of Lazarus—real bodily parts. They are thus portrayed as going to their reward bodily, despite the fact that Dives's body was duly buried and in the grave. Those who contend that, by this parable, Christ was supporting what we believe to be a pagan concept of death, must also hold that He condoned the unethical schemes of the unjust steward. But this no one would attempt to do.

As to "Abraham's bosom"—noted later—and its involvements, Dr. Charles L. Ives, former professor of medicine at Yale (*The Bible Doctrine of the Soul*, 1877, pp. 54, 55), pointedly remarks:

It will not do to say, as has been claimed, that Abraham's

bosom is a figurative expression for the highest celestial felicity; for, Abraham himself in his own person appears on the scene. And if he himself is present in a literal sense, it is hardly fair to use his bosom, at the same time, in a figurative sense! If his bosom is figurative, then Abraham himself, and so then the whole narrative, is figurative.

All attempts to blend the literal and the figurative are equally futile. We believe with Bloomfield (*Greek Testament*): "The best Commentators, both ancient and modern, with reason consider it as *a parable*."—On Luke 16:19. Constable calls it the "general sentiment of Christendom." The introductory phrasing and the entire form and construction correspond exactly to other parables of Christ, such as the unjust steward and the prodigal son (Luke 15:11; 16:1), which immediately precede and follow the rich man and Lazarus. Proof must be offered to sustain the contrary.

4. PARABLE NOT SUITABLE BASIS FOR DOCTRINE.—The absurdity of the popular contention becomes the more apparent the further the involvements are pursued. To cite this allegory as a literal instead of a figurative account, would, as has already been observed, place heaven and hell geographically within speaking and seeing distance of each other, which is incongruous. Saints and sinners eternally holding converse! The resultant question is inescapable: Will all who die in Christ see and converse, across the dividing gulf, through all eternity, with their own loved ones who have died out of Christ?

If the recital is conceded to be but a parable, but used to sustain the concept of the conscious torment of the wicked, then we are confronted with the universally

accepted principle that a doctrine cannot safely be built upon a parable or an allegory alone, especially when it contradicts the plain teachings of Scripture. To do so involves the one who attempts it in absurdity and contradiction. We repeat that this parabolic discourse of the Master was not designed to teach conditions the other side of death, or in the unseen world in the intermediate state, but to convey great moral lessons. Edersheim (*Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*) rightly says that doctrine cannot be derived from this parable concerning the other world, or the character or duration of future punishments, or the moral improvement of those in Gehenna.\* We feel that to use it as proof that men receive their rewards at death is squarely to contradict Christ Himself, who states explicitly that the righteous and the wicked receive their reward, "*when the Son of man shall come in his glory*" (see Matt. 25:31-41).

If dead men *actually* hold converse with one another, then the parable contradicts the plainest declarations of Scripture—"His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish" (Ps. 146:4); "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence" (Ps. 115:17).

Abraham himself had died and his sons buried him (Gen. 25:8, 9). Nor is there any account of his resurrection. In the Biblical account (Hebrews 11) he, like the other patriarchs, is awaiting that "better" resurrection at the second coming of Christ.

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\*And Dr. William Smith (*Dictionary of the Bible*, vol. 2, p. 1038) insists: "It is impossible to ground the proof of an important theological doctrine on a passage which confessedly abounds in Jewish metaphor."

So the contention that the reward is received at death (a) nullifies the judgment, anticipating its predicted time; (b) completely contradicts what we believe to be the clear testimony of Scripture that the dead are asleep; (c) represents disembodied spirits as possessing bodily members; and (d) puts the spirits in full view of one another.

5. UNRESTRICTED LITERALISM IN CONFLICT WITH BIBLE TRUTH.—If the narrative is literal, then the beggar received his reward, and the rich man his punishment, immediately after death and *before the judgment day*. But that again is in direct conflict with Paul's declaration that God "hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness" (Acts 17:31). This day, we understand, will be when "the Son of man shall come in his glory . . . and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another" (Matt. 25:31, 32). A literal interpretation also conflicts with Christ's promise: "Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Rev. 22:12); and with the promise of reward in Luke 14:14: "Thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." Compare also Paul's statement: "There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord . . . shall give me at that day" (2 Tim. 4:8)—the day of His appearing.

This statement is in harmony with Malachi 4:1-3, which says that "the day cometh"—a *future* event—when the wicked are to suffer the torments of consuming fire. It seems clear to us that the Old Testament, or "Moses and all the prophets," are united and

harmonious in testifying that the dead, both the righteous and the wicked, lie silent and unconscious in death until the resurrection day. (See Job 14:12-15, 20, 21; 17:13; 19:25, 27; Ps. 115:17.)

Jesus frequently referred to the fate of the wicked. He mentioned "hell" (Matt. 10:28), referred to "hell fire" (Matt. 5:22), called attention to the "resurrection of damnation" (John 5:29), to the "damnation of hell" (Matt. 23:33), and to "eternal damnation" (Mark 3:29). The Saviour also referred to the eternal home of the righteous. He called it "paradise" (Luke 23:43) and His "Father's kingdom" (Matt. 26:29). He bade His followers lay up treasure in heaven (Matt. 6:20), and declared that it is to heaven, and His "Father's house" (John 14:2), that He will take His children when He comes the second time.

6. DOES NOT INVOLVE CONSCIOUSNESS OF DEAD.— In the parable, Dives lifted up his eyes "in torments," "in this flame." But according to Scripture this torment does not precede the second advent (2 Thess. 1:7, 8). *Gehenna* is the Greek word usually used when the fires of destruction are described. But in this story of the rich man the word "hell" is translated from *hadēs*, and the grave contains no such fire. To all Jews, all the dead were in *hadēs*, the grave, the home of the dead.

So, for us the story of the rich man and Lazarus in no way proves the consciousness of the dead, and the present and eternal torment of the wicked. Such a conclusion is, we believe, wholly without justification, and contradictory to the clear, plain teaching of the Word. Death is consistently set forth in Scripture as a

condition of silence, darkness, and unconsciousness (Ps. 6:5; 115:17; Isa. 38:18).

Neither Lazarus nor Dives has as yet received his reward. They are silent in death, awaiting the voice that will call forth "all that are in the graves" (John 5:28). They are reserved to the day of judgment (2 Peter 2:4, 9; compare Job 21:30).

In this allegory the unconscious dead are fictitiously represented as carrying on a conversation, *but without involving the actual consciousness of the dead*—just as in the Old Testament, in the parable of the trees, they are parabolically portrayed as holding conversation, and anointing a king over them. But none would contend that this is evidence that trees talk and have a king over them (Judges 9:8-15; compare 2 Kings 14:9).

The great gulf (Greek, *chasma*, "chasm")—narrow enough to allow conversation to take place across it, but deep enough to prevent passage—is incomprehensible on the hypothesis of immaterial beings. Rather, it would indicate the irrevocable division that death fixes between the good and the bad at the close of their earthly probation. Each must remain in the class in which death finds him, until the great assize. Today one may pass from the state of the condemned (John 3:18) to that of the pardoned. But when death comes, it is forever too late. The gulf is fixed.

7. OBVIOUS PURPOSE OF THIS PARABLE.—A parable is spoken for the purpose of influencing the living, and is adapted to the time. But God's appointed time of grace for man is *before* death and resurrection. Retribution comes *after* the resurrection. Life after death

is always consequent upon the resurrection. Moreover, when the rich man pleaded with Abraham that Lazarus be sent back to warn his kinsfolk against the terrors of hell, lest they come to the same place of torment, the answer is explicit: "They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them" (Luke 16:29). And if they will not heed them, then, Christ says plainly, they would not be persuaded "though one rose from the dead" (verse 31).

#### 8. WE MUST THEREFORE CONCLUDE:

*a.* That the dialog, with its parabolic personification, was wholly imaginary. And we believe not merely that it did not happen but that it never could happen, as between the saved and the lost.

*b.* That the time is likewise fictitious. Not only is the dialog invented, but time is antedated. (Men are not to be rewarded, or to receive retribution, until the resurrection, but here they are pictured allegorically as before the resurrection.)

*c.* That it is the only place in Scripture where *hadēs* is portrayed as a place of torment. Such is usually reserved for *gehenna*. But Christ, for the purpose of parable, and utilizing current concepts, here antedates and portrays Dives and Lazarus as alive in *hadēs* before the resurrection, just as Isaiah raises up his dead kings in *hadēs* to utter a taunt upon Babylon.

According to the teaching of Jesus in other parables, the recompense is at the resurrection of the just—the "time of harvest" and the "end of the world," when God's people are gathered into His garner, and the wicked, as tares, are bundled for burning (Matt. 13:30, 49; Luke 14:14).

Such we understand to be the intent and the limitations of this parable.

### III. Contemporary Jewish Concept of “Abraham’s Bosom”

It is evident, from Jewish writings, that the Pharisees and various others of Christ’s day believed in the idea of consciousness after death. Their concept of *hadēs* had greatly changed since the days of the patriarchs and the close of the Old Testament canon. And in the time of Jesus they believed much as did the Greeks and others around them.

Reference is made, in the parable just noted, to “Abraham’s bosom” (Luke 16:22), an expression found no other place in Scripture. So far as the Bible is concerned, there is nothing to indicate where “Abraham’s bosom” is, or what it signifies.

We find, however, that the expression appears in extra-Biblical literature, and that it was apparently a current concept, or tradition, of the Jewish people. Josephus, in his “Discourse Concerning Hades,” states that they call “Abraham’s bosom” the place of felicity to which the righteous go at death. The Talmud refers to it as “Abraham’s lap” (*Kiddushin* 72<sup>b</sup>). It was evidently the common belief of many in the days of Jesus.

In fact, the description of *hadēs*, as given by Josephus, parallels very closely the narrative of the rich man and Lazarus. (Full statement quoted in additional note on p. 565.) There we read of the great gulf fixed, of the chamber of the righteous being within sight and speaking distance of the chamber where the wicked are tormented, and of other details referred to in the story as narrated by Jesus. Not only do these

concepts appear in the writings of Josephus, but they are to be found in other Jewish literature. Thus we read concerning *hadēs*: (1) that *hadēs* was composed of *two* chambers (2 Esdras 4:41); (2) that one of these chambers was for the righteous; the other for the wicked (Midrash, on Ruth 1:1); (3) that the righteous inhabit one chamber (Wisdom of Solomon 3:1); the wicked the other, where they are accursed, scourged, and tormented (Enoch 22:9-13; Talmud *Erubin* 19<sup>a</sup>); (4) that the inhabitants of one chamber are visible to, and within speaking distance of, the inhabitants of the other chamber (Midrash, on Eccl. 7:14); (5) that the righteous are welcomed into *hadēs* by companies of ministering angels (Talmud *Kethuboth* 104<sup>a</sup>; 4 Ezra 7:85-87, 91-95); (6) that the righteous are received into *hadēs* by Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (4 Maccabees 13:17); and (7) that the righteous, as part of their reward, sit "in Abraham's lap" (Talmud *Kiddushin* 72<sup>b</sup>). And Josephus gives this testimony:

They also believe that souls have an immortal vigour in them, and that under the earth there will be rewards or punishments, according as they have lived virtuously or viciously in this life; and the latter are to be detained in an everlasting prison, but that the former shall have power to revive and live again.—*Antiquities* xviii. 1. 3.

Such was the setting of current concepts, or traditions, concerning *hadēs* as the home of the dead, at the time that Jesus referred to it in the parable.

#### IV. Obvious Lessons of the Parable

Important lessons are taught in this parable: (1) that earthly blessings at best are uncertain and transitory; (2) that rich men are responsible not only for

what they do but also for what they do not do with their wealth; (3) that this present life is the only opportunity we will be given to make preparation for the future; (4) that selfish inhumanity, and the wrong use of riches, disqualifies one from a place in God's eternal kingdom; (5) that the clear teachings of Scripture are sufficient to make us wise unto salvation.

The rich man was not separated from Abraham because he was rich, for Abraham himself was a man of wealth, but because he had disregarded the fundamental teachings of the law and the prophets, which are love to God and love to man. Jesus said that on these two hang all the law and the prophets (Matt. 22:40).

By this series of parables Jesus unmasked the philosophy of the Pharisees and revealed the utter worthlessness of certain of their teachings. They stood condemned before the judgment seat of the Eternal. In the very Scriptures they professed to teach—Moses and the prophets—witness was borne against the things they were doing. "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven," declared Jesus (Matt. 5:20). His kingdom is a kingdom of fellowship, where love and joy abound. When we enter that kingdom we are the children of God and members one of another. It is a family relationship where all are equal and love is the bond. These basic principles of the kingdom the Pharisees failed to understand.

The parable also presses home the truth that while eternal life or death is a choice set before every one

of us, yet we reveal in this life our fitness for that life to come. The rich man was not condemned for his riches, but for his selfishness; nor was the beggar saved because of his poverty or even his earthly sufferings. Our Lord was not condemning wealth, but its misuse; neither was He extolling poverty as a virtue. He confounded the Pharisees from their own teachings, thus preventing them from throwing dust, as it were, into the eyes of the multitude.

This parable, framed as it is in the form of an *argumentum ad hominem*, is, as we have already noted, based upon the Pharisees' own concepts of the condition of the dead. On this Ellen G. White has remarked:

In this parable Christ was meeting the people on their own ground. The doctrine of a conscious state of existence between death and the resurrection was held by many of those who were listening to Christ's words. The Saviour knew of their ideas, and He framed His parable so as to inculcate important truths through these preconceived opinions. He held up before His hearers a mirror wherein they might see themselves in their true relation to God. He used the prevailing opinion to convey the idea He wished to make prominent to all—that no man is valued for his possessions; for all he has belongs to him only as lent by the Lord. A misuse of these gifts will place him below the poorest and most afflicted man who loves God and trusts in Him.—*Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 263.

It was brought to this group of critics, then, not to condone their errors but to illustrate from their own teachings the unsoundness of their position. Our entrance into the kingdom of God is by grace, and grace alone; but once in the kingdom we are to live as citizens of the kingdom, according to the principles of that kingdom, as revealed in Scripture. If men turn

from this clear revelation of God in His Word, they will not believe though one were to rise from the dead.

A supernatural event, or even an accumulation of such events, will not suffice to convince those who reject the Word of God.

In this parable Jesus was revealing to His hearers (some of whom were tax gatherers and notable sinners), not only that the philosophy of the Pharisees is unsound but that it can be justly condemned even from their own literature.

#### Additional Note

The following paragraphs are taken from the Works of Josephus, his "Discourse to the Greeks Concerning Hades":

1. . . . Hades is a place in the world not regularly finished; a *subterraneous* region, wherein the light of this world does not shine; from which circumstance, that in this region the light does not shine, it cannot be but there must be in it perpetual *darkness*. This region is allotted as a place of custody for souls, in which angels are appointed as guardians to them, who distribute to them *temporary punishments*, agreeable to every one's behavior and manners.

2. In this region there is a certain place set apart, as a *lake of unquenchable fire*, whereinto we suppose no one hath hitherto been cast; but it is prepared for a day afore-determined by God, in which one righteous sentence shall deservedly be passed upon all men; when the unjust, and those that have been disobedient to God, and have given honour to such idols as have been the vain operations of the hands of men as to God himself, shall be adjudged to this *everlasting punishment*, as having been the causes of defilement; while the just shall obtain an *incorruptible* and never-fading *kingdom*. These are now indeed confined in Hades, but not in the same place wherein the unjust are confined.

3. For there is one descent into this region, at whose *gate* . . . when those pass through that are conducted down by the angels appointed over souls, they do not go the same way; but the just are guided to the *right hand*, and are led with hymns sung by the *angels* appointed over that place, unto a region of *light*, in which the just have dwelt from the beginning of the world; not constrained by necessity, but ever enjoying the prospect of the good things they see, and rejoicing in the expectation of those new enjoyments which will be peculiar to every one of them, and esteeming those things beyond what we have here; with whom there is no place of toil, no burning heat, no piercing cold, nor are any briars there; but the countenance of the *fathers*, and of the just, which they see, always smiles upon them, while they wait for that rest and *eternal new life in heaven*, which is to succeed this region. This place we call *The Bosom of Abraham*.

4. But as to the unjust, they are dragged by force to the *left hand* by the angels allotted for punishment, no longer going with a good-will, but as prisoners driven by violence; to whom are sent the angels appointed over them to reproach them and threaten them with their terrible looks, and to thrust them still downwards. Now those angels that are set over these souls drag them into the neighbourhood of hell itself; who, when they are hard by it, continually hear the noise of it, and do not stand clear of the hot vapour itself; but when they have a near view of this spectacle, as of a terrible and exceeding great prospect of fire, they are struck with a fearful expectation of a future judgment, and in effect punished thereby: and not only so, but where they see the place [or choir] of the *fathers* and of the just, even hereby are they punished; for a *chaos* deep and large is fixed between them; insomuch that a just man that hath compassion upon them cannot be admitted, nor can one that is unjust, if he were bold enough to attempt it, pass over it.—*The Complete Works of Flavius Josephus*, Whiston translation (John C. Winston: Philadelphia), p. 901.

# Champions of Conditional Immortality Span the Centuries

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## QUESTION 44

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*You allude to others who, through the centuries, have held that immortality is not received until the resurrection, that the righteous dead sleep during the interim of death until awakened by the Life-giver at the resurrection, also that the wicked will ultimately be destroyed. Who are these "conditionalists"? Are they not obscure heretics, for practically all orthodox scholars have held to innate immortality? Kindly name some of the advocates to whom you allude, and cite some of their writings.*

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Truth is not, and never has been, established by human majorities. Theological truth is ever, and only, based upon the immutable Word of God and determined by its inspired precepts and principles. But always there have been godly and scholarly champions of genuine truth. And this is definitely the case with the doctrine of immortality in, and only in and through, Jesus Christ at His second advent. Immortality is a gift, we believe, bestowed upon the righteous only, who have by faith accepted eternal life in Christ (John 3: 16, 36; John 11:25, 26), at the appearing of our Lord (1 John 5:11; 1 Cor. 15:51, 53).

The line of adherents to this great Biblical truth has been more constant, stronger, and more illustrious than most of us have been aware. In fact, the line of advocates has been virtually continuous from Reformation times onward. The names of these pious Christian leaders and brilliant scholars, found in every generation, are spread over the centuries. Because of space limitations only a few can be cited here; but the historical record is astonishing. Full documented evidence can be compassed only in book form, but the examples that follow indicate the high caliber of, and often the key positions held by, these adherents to conditionalism, as it is often called—or *life only in Christ through the resurrection*. Examples must be limited to men from Protestant Reformation times onward.\*

The brilliance of the assemblage of names that follow surely indicates that the epithet “heretic,” in contrast to the “orthodoxy” of the majority, cannot justly be applied to this notable company of Christian leaders—bishops, archbishops, archdeacons, deans, canons, presbyters, teachers, linguists, Bible translators, exegetes, administrators, principals, pastors, editors, poets, scientists, barristers, philosophers, and even a prime minister—whose names have adorned the roster of the Christian church and have held the confidence and respect of their fellows.

These men were, moreover, spread throughout all

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\*These earlier exceptions, however, must be noted: The twelfth century Piedmontese Waldenses, in their Catechism for the instructing of their youth (Molland, *The History of the Evangelical Churches of the Valleys of the Piedmont*, 1658, p. 75), declared that man is but “mortal.” And John Wycliffe—who derived many of his evangelical concepts from them—likewise held that “immortalitie or undedlynesse” was to be bestowed at the resurrection, and that the dead cannot now be benefited by prayers, but are “all dead” and are “clepid slepyng” (called sleeping).

faiths—Lutheran, Reformed, Anglican, Baptist, Congregationalist, Presbyterian, Methodist, et cetera. And not only do they extend over these four centuries, but *they exist today in high church circles*. We submit that if they, whose names continue to be revered, honored, and unchallenged in their respective church affiliations, were not considered heretics for so believing and teaching, then by the same token neither we, nor others today (like the late Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. William Temple, Anglican primate of Great Britain), who conscientiously hold the same, can justly be charged with “heresy” for so believing.

### The Historical Setting

On December 19, 1513, in connection with the eighth session of the fifth Lateran Council, Pope Leo X issued a Bull (*Apostolici regimis*) declaring, “We do condemn and reprobate all who assert that the intelligent soul is mortal” (*Damnamus et reprobamus omnes assertentes animam intellectivam mortalem esse*). This was directed against the growing “heresy” of those who denied the natural immortality of the soul, and avowed the conditional immortality of man. The Bull also decreed that “all who adhere to the like erroneous assertions shall be shunned and punished as heretics.” The decrees of *this* Council, it should be noted, were all issued in the form of Bulls or constitutions (H. J. Schroeder, *Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils*, 1937, pp. 483, 487).

In 1516 Pietro Pomponatius, of Mantua, noted Italian professor and leader among the Averrorists (who denied the immortality of the soul), issued a

book in opposition to this position called *Treatise on the Immortality of the Soul*. This was widely read, especially in the Italian universities. As a result, he was haled before the Inquisition, and his book publicly burned in Venice.

Then, on October 31, 1517, Luther posted his famous Theses on the church door in Wittenberg. In his 1520 published Defence of 41 of his propositions, Luther cited the pope's immortality declaration, as among "those monstrous opinions to be found in the Roman dunghill of decretals" (proposition 27). In the twenty-seventh proposition of his Defence Luther said:

However, I permit the Pope to establish articles of faith for himself and for his own faithful—such are: That the bread and wine are transubstantiated in the sacrament; that the essence of God neither generates nor is generated; that the soul is the substantial form of the human body; that he [the pope] is emperor of the world and king of heaven, and earthly god; *that the soul is immortal*; and all these endless monstrosities in the Roman dunghill of decretals—in order that such as his faith is, such may be his gospel, such also his faithful, and such his church, and that the lips may have suitable lettuce and the lid may be worthy of the dish.—Martin Luther, *Assertio Omnia Articulorum M. Lutheri per Bullam Leonis X. Novissimam Damnatorum* (Assertion of all the articles of M. Luther condemned by the latest Bull of Leo X), article 27, Weimar edition of Luther's Works, vol. 7, pp. 131, 132 (a point-by-point exposition of his position, written Dec. 1, 1520, in response to requests for a fuller treatment than that given in his *Adversus execrabilem Antichristi Bullam*, and *Wider die Bulle des Endchristi*).

Archdeacon Francis Blackburne states in his *Short Historical View of the Controversy Concerning an Intermediate State*, of 1765:

Luther espoused the doctrine of the sleep of the soul, upon a Scripture foundation, and then he made use of it as a confuta-

tion of purgatory, and saint worship, and continued in that belief to the last moment of his life.—Page 14.

In support, Blackburne has an extended Appendix section dealing with Luther's teaching as set forth in his writings, and discusses the charges and counter-charges.\*

Here follow certain of the leading witnesses of recent centuries, with Luther and Tyndale in some detail.

### Sixteenth Century

MARTIN LUTHER (1493-1546), German Reformer and Bible translator

The immediate cause of Luther's stand on the sleep of the soul was the issue of purgatory, with its postulate of the conscious torment of anguished souls. While Luther is not always consistent, the predominant note running all through his writings is that souls sleep in peace, without consciousness or pain. The Christian dead are not aware of anything—see not, feel not, understand not, and are not conscious of passing events. Luther held and periodically stated that in the sleep of death, as in normal physical sleep, there is complete unconsciousness and unawareness of the condition of death or the passage of time.† Death is a deep, sound, sweet sleep.‡ And the dead will remain asleep

\*The Lutheran scholar Dr. T. A. Kantonen (*The Christian Hope*, 1594, p. 37), likewise referred to Luther's position in these words:

“Luther, with a greater emphasis on the resurrection, preferred to concentrate on the scriptural metaphor of sleep. ‘For just as one who falls asleep and reaches morning unexpectedly when he awakes, without knowing what has happened to him so we shall suddenly rise on the last day without knowing how we have come into death and through death.’ ‘We shall sleep, until He comes and knocks on the little grave and says, ‘Doctor Martin, get up! Then I shall rise in a moment, and be happy with Him forever.’”

†See “Auslegung des ersten Buches Mose” (1544), in *Schriften*, vol. 1, col. 1756; “Kirchen-Postille” (1528), in *Schriften*, vol. 11, col. 1143; *Schriften*, vol. 2, col. 1069; *Deutsche Schriften* (Erlangen ed.), vol. 11, p. 142ff.; vol. 41 (1525), p. 373.

‡“Catechetische Schriften” (1542), in *Schriften*, vol. 11, pp. 287, 288.

until the day of resurrection,\* which resurrection embraces both body and soul, when both will come together again.†

Here are sample Luther citations. In the quaint 1573 English translation we read:

Salomon iudgeth that the dead are a sleepe, and feele nothing at all. For the dead lye there accompting neyther dayes nor yeares, but when they are awaked, they shall seeme to haue slept scarce one minute.—*An Exposition of Salomon's Booke, called Ecclesiastes or the Preacher*, 1573, folio 151v.

But we Christians, who have been redeemed from all this through the precious blood of God's Son, should train and accustom ourselves in faith to despise death and regard it as a deep, strong, sweet sleep; to consider the coffin as nothing other than our Lord Jesus' bosom or Paradise, the grave as nothing other than a soft couch of ease or rest. As verily, before God, it truly is just this; for he testifies, John 11:11: Lazarus, our friend sleeps; Matthew 9:24: The maiden is not dead, she sleeps. Thus, too, St. Paul in 1 Corinthians 15, removes from sight all hateful aspects of death as related to our mortal body and brings forward nothing but charming and joyful aspects of the promised life. He says there [vv. 42ff]: It is sown in corruption and will rise in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor (that is, a hateful, shameful form) and will rise in glory; it is sown in weakness and will rise in strength; it is sown in natural body and will rise a spiritual body.—“Christian Song Latin and German, for Use at Funerals,” 1542, in *Works of Luther* (1932), vol. 6, pp. 287, 288.

Thus after death the soul goes to its bedchamber and to its peace, and while it is sleeping it does not realize its sleep, and God preserves indeed the awakening soul. God is able to awake Elijah, Moses, and others, and so control them, so that they will live. But how can that be? That we do not know; we satisfy ourselves with the example of bodily sleep, and with what God says: it is a sleep, a rest, and a peace. He who sleeps naturally knows nothing of that which happens in his neighbor's house; and

\* “Auslegungen über die Psalmen [3]” in 1533, in *Schriften*, vol. 4, pp. 323, 324.

† “Am Zweiten Sonntage nach Trinitatis,” “Haus-Postille,” in *Schriften*, vol. 13, col. 2153; “Predigt über 1 Cor. 15: (54-57),” (1533), “Auslegung des neuen Testaments,” in *Schriften*, vol. 8, col. 1340.

nevertheless, he still is living, even though, contrary to the nature of life, he is unconscious in his sleep. Exactly the same will happen also in that life, but in another and a better way.\*—"Auslegung des ersten Buches Mose," in *Schriften*, vol. 1, cols. 1759, 1760.

Here is another sample:

We should learn to view our death in the right light, so that we need not become alarmed on account of it, as unbelief does; because in Christ it is indeed not death, but a fine, sweet and brief sleep, which brings us release from this vale of tears, from sin and from the fear and extremity of real death and from all the misfortunes of this life, and we shall be secure and without care, rest sweetly and gently for a brief moment, as on a sofa, until the time when he shall call and awaken us together with all his dear children to his eternal glory and joy. For since we call it a sleep, we know that we shall not remain in it, but be again awakened and live, and that the time during which we sleep, shall seem no longer than if we had just fallen asleep. Hence, we shall censure ourselves that we were surprised or alarmed at such a sleep in the hour of death, and suddenly come alive out of the grave and from decomposition, and entirely well, fresh, with a pure, clear, glorified life, meet our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in the clouds. . . .

Scripture everywhere affords such consolation, which speaks of the death of the saints, as if they fell asleep and were gathered to their fathers, that is, had overcome death through this faith and comfort in Christ, and awaited the resurrection, together with the saints who preceded them in death.—*A Compend of Luther's Theology*, edited by Hugh Thomson Ker, Jr., p. 242.

WILLIAM TYNDALE (1484-1536), English Bible translator and martyr

In Britain William Tyndale, translator of the Bible into English, came to the defense of the revived

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\*In his Master of Arts thesis (1946), "A Study of Martin Luther's Teaching Concerning the State of the Dead," T. N. Ketola, tabulating Luther's references to death as a sleep—as found in Luther's *Sammliche Schriften*, Walsh's *Concordia*, 1904 ed.—lists 125 specific Luther references to death as a sleep. Ketola cites another smaller group of references showing Luther believed in the periodic consciousness of some. But the main point is that, while the dead live, they are unconscious—which is stated some seven times.

teaching of conditional immortality. This, as well as other teachings, brought him into direct conflict with the papal champion, Sir Thomas More, likewise of England. In 1529 More had strongly objected to the "pestilential sect" represented by Tyndale and Luther, because they held that "all souls lie and sleep till doomsday." In 1530 Tyndale responded vigorously, declaring:

And ye, in putting them [the departed souls] in heaven, hell, and purgatory, destroy the arguments wherewith Christ and Paul prove the resurrection. . . . And again, if the souls be in heaven, tell me why they be not in as good case as the angels be? And then what cause is there of the resurrection?—William Tyndale, *An Answer to Sir Thomas More's Dialogue* (Parker's 1850 reprint), bk. 4, ch. 4, pp. 180, 181.

Tyndale went to the heart of the issue in pointing out the papacy's draft upon the teachings of "heathen philosophers" in seeking to establish its contention of innate immortality.

Thus:

The true faith putteth [setteth forth] the resurrection, which we be warned to look for every hour. The heathen philosophers, denying that, did put [set forth] that the souls did ever live. And the pope joineth the spiritual doctrine of Christ and the fleshly doctrine of philosophers together; things so contrary that they cannot agree, no more than the Spirit and the flesh do in a Christian man. And because the fleshly-minded pope consenteth unto heathen doctrine, therefore he corrupteth the Scripture to stablish it.—*Ibid.*, p. 180.

In yet another section of the same treatise, dealing with the "invocation of saints," Tyndale uses the same reasoning, pointing out that the doctrine of departed saints being in heaven had not yet been introduced in Christ's day:

And when he [More] proveth that the saints be in heaven in glory with Christ already, saying, "If God be their God, they be in heaven, for he is not the God of the dead;" there he stealeth away Christ's argument, wherewith he proveth the resurrection: that Abraham and all saints should rise again, and not that their souls were in heaven; which doctrine was not yet in the world. And with that doctrine he taketh away the resurrection quite, and maketh Christ's argument of none effect.—*Ibid.*, p. 118.

Tyndale presses his contention still further by showing the conflict of papal teaching with St. Paul, as he says in slightly sarcastic vein:

"Nay, Paul, thou art unlearned; go to Master More, and learn a new way. We be not most miserable, though we rise not again; for our souls go to heaven as soon as we be dead, and are there in as great joy as Christ that is risen again." And I marvel that Paul had not comforted the Thessalonians with that doctrine, if he had wist it, that the souls of their dead had been in joy; as he did with the resurrection, that their dead should rise again. If the souls be in heaven, in as great glory as the angels, after your doctrine, shew me what cause should be of the resurrection?—*Ibid.*

JOHN FRITH (1503-33), associate of Tyndale and fellow martyr

*A Disputacyon of Purgatorie . . . divided into three Bokes, c. 1530*

*An Answer to John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester*

Notwithstanding, let me grant it him that some are already in hell and some in heaven, which thing he shall never be able to prove by the Scriptures, yea, and which plainly destroy the resurrection, and taketh away the arguments wherewith Christ and Paul do prove that we shall rise; . . . and as touching this point where they rest, I dare be bold to say that they are in the hand of God.—*An Answer to John Fisher*.

GEORGE WISHART (1500-1546), Greek scholar, friend of Latimer, tutor of John Knox, and martyr

Wishart was charged with attacking auricular confession, transubstantiation, extreme unction, holy water, invocation of saints (who couldn't hear their supplications anyway), and purgatory. Charge "XVI" was for *promulgating the doctrine of the sleep of the soul.*

Charge "XVI": Thou false heretic has preached openly saying, that the soul of man shall sleep to the latter day of judgment and shall not obtain life immortal until that day.—Blackburne, *Historical View*, p. 21.

#### "GENERAL BAPTISTS"

In his *Institutes of Ecclesiastical History*, chancellor of the University of Göttingen, Johann L. von Mosheim, records that the "General Baptists" were spread in large numbers over many of the provinces of England (Murdock tr., bk. IV, cent. XVI, sec. III, pt. 2, ch. III, par. 23). As one article of faith they held "that the soul, between death and the resurrection at the last day, has neither pleasure nor pain, but is in a state of insensibility."—*Ibid.*

On the other hand, Calvin, deeply disturbed over the spread of this teaching in different lands, in 1534 wrote a militant tract, *Psychopannychia* (Soul Sleep). It was issued to refute the teaching that the "soul dies or sleeps," and stated that this concept had "already drawn thousands" into its acceptance.

Dr. Joseph Priestley, after observing that many of the early reformers held to "soul-sleep," declared:

Had it not been for the authority of Calvin, who wrote expressly against it [soul sleep], the doctrine of an *intermediate conscious state* would, in all probability, have been as effectually exploded as the doctrine of *purgatory* itself.—*Corruptions of Christianity*, in *Works* (1818), vol. 5, p. 229.

## Seventeenth Century

"R. O. [Richard (or Robert) Overton], scholar, soldier, and pamphleteer

*Man's Mortality*, 1643

Title page reads:

A Treatise wherein 'T is proved, both Theologically and Philosophically, That as *whole man sinned*, so *whole man died*; contrary to that common distinction of *Soul and Body*: And that the *present* going of the Soul into *heaven* or *hell*, is a meer *Fiction*: And that at the *Resurrection* is the beginning of our *immortality*; and then actual *Condemnation* and *Salvation*, and not before.

SAMUEL RICHARDSON (fl. 1633-1658), pastor, First Particular Baptist Church, of London

*A Discourse on the Torments of Hell: the Foundations and Pillars thereof discover'd, search'd, shaken, and remov'd. With Infallible Proofs that there is not to be a Punishment after this Life, for any to endure that shall never end*, 1658

JOHN MILTON (1608-1674), "Greatest of the Sacred Poets"; Latin secretary to Cromwell

*Treatise of Christian Doctrine*, vol. 1, ch. 13

(Taught totally unconscious sleep of man in death until coming of Christ and resurrection.)

Inasmuch then as the whole man is uniformly said to consist of body, and soul (whatever may be the distinct provinces assigned to these divisions), I will show, that in death, first, the whole man, and secondly, each component part, suffers privation of life. . . . The grave is the common guardian of all till the day of judgment.—Chapter 13.

GEORGE WITHER (1588-1667), "The Christian Poet,"

English translation of *Nemesius*, [early] *Bishop of Emesa*, 1636

(Contends for conditional immortality; soul is asleep in death.)

JOHN JACKSON (1686-1763), rector of Rossington

*A Dissertation on Matter and Spirit*, 1735

*The Belief of a Future State*, 1745

*A Clear Distinction Between True and False Religion*, 1750

(Doctrine of eternal torment confuted and condemned.)

JOHN CANNE (1590-1667), printer of R. Overton's work; pastor, Broadmead Baptist Church, Bristol

*Reference Bible*, 1682

(Held essentially the same as R. Overton.)

ARCHBISHOP JOHN TILLOTSON (1630-1694), of Canterbury

*Works*, 1683

I do not find that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is anywhere expressly delivered in Scripture, but taken for granted.—*Works*, 1717 ed., vol. 1, p. 749.

DR. ISAAC BARROW (1630-1677), professor of Greek, Cambridge University

*Duration of Future Punishment*, in *Works*

(Maintained eternal life is conditional; held to final destruction of wicked.)

### Eighteenth Century

DR. WILLIAM COWARD (1657-1725), practicing physician, London

*A Survey of the Search After Souls*

*Second Thoughts Concerning the Human Soul, demonstrating the Notion of Human Soul, as believ'd to be a Spiritual and Immortal Substance, united to a Human Body, to be plain Heathenish Invention, and not Consonant to the Principles of Philosophy, Reason or Religion,* 1702

*Further Thoughts Concerning the Human Soul,* 1703

HENRY LAYTON (1670-1706), Anglican, author of twelve books on conditionalism

*Arguments and Replies, in a dispute concerning the nature of the Soul,* 1703

*A Search After Souls,* 1706

(Contends that during life, we live and move in Christ; and when we die we rest and sleep in Him, in expectation of being raised at His second coming.)

JOSEPH NICOL SCOTT, M.D. (1703-1769), minister, assisting his father, Thomas Scott

*Sermons Preached in Defence of All Religion,* 1743

(Maintains—vol. 2, sermons 17, 18—that life is for the righteous *only*, with destruction for the wicked.)

DR. JOSEPH PRIESTLEY (1733-1804), Unitarian, scientist, and philosopher

“Disquisitions Relating to Matter and Spirit,” in *Works*, vol. 3

*The History of Opinion Concerning the State of the Dead*

(The “state of the soul in death” is one of utter insensibility, as much dead as the body itself while it continues in the state of death.)

BISHOP EDMUND LAW (1703-1787), master of St. Peter's College, archdeacon of Staffordshire, bishop of Carlisle

*Considerations on . . . the Theory of Religion*, 1749  
*The State of the Dead*, 1765 (Appendix to the foregoing)

(Challenged doctrine of conscious intermediate state; held death to be a sleep, a negation of all life, thought, or action—a state of rest, silence, oblivion.)

PETER PECARD (c. 1718-1797), master of Magdalen College, Cambridge, dean of Peterborough

*Observations on the Doctrine of an Intermediate State, Between Death and the Resurrection*, 1756  
(Immortality not innate, but a gift through Christ.)

ARCHDEACON FRANCIS BLACKBURNE (1705-1787), of Cleveland; rector of Richmond

*A Short Historical View of the Controversy Concerning the Intermediate State*, 1765

(Most complete history of the topic in 18th century.)

BISHOP WILLIAM WARBURTON (1698-1779), of Gloucester, theological controversialist

*Divine Legation of Moses*, 1738-41

(Styled militant believers in everlasting torment as the “unmerciful doctors.”)

SAMUEL BOURN (1714-1796), dissenter, Rivington, Lancashire

*Christian Doctrine of Future Punishment*, 1759

(Stresses "total destruction, or annihilation or ceasing to exist" for the incorrigibly wicked.)

DR. WILLIAM WHISTON (1667-1752), Baptist theologian, professor of mathematics, Cambridge University

*The Eternity of Hell-Torments Considered*, 1740

(Denied doctrine of eternal torment; held wicked to be totally destroyed.)

DR. JOHN TOTTIE (fl. 1772), canon of Christ Church, Oxford; archdeacon of Worcester

*Sermons Preached Before University of Oxford*, 1775

(Opposed doctrine of natural immortality of soul.)

PROF. HENRY DODWELL (1641-1711), classical scholar, professor at Oxford (the "learned Dodwell")

*Letter Concerning the Immortality of the Soul*, 1703

*The Natural Mortality of Human Souls*, 1708

*An Epistolary Discourse, Proving From the Scriptures and the First Fathers, That the Soul Is a Principle Naturally Mortal; but Immortalized Actually by the Pleasure of God*, 1706

### Nineteenth Century

BISHOP TIMOTHY KENDRICK, Anglican

*Sermons*, 1805

(The soul of man dies with the body, and is restored to life at the resurrection and second advent.)

DR. WILLIAM THOMSON (1819-1890), archbishop of York

*The Thought of Death* (Bampton Lecture), 1862

Life to the godless must be the beginning of destruction since nothing but God and that which pleases Him can permanently exist.

DR. EDWARD WHITE (1819-1887), Congregationalist, pastor of St. Paul's Chapel; chairman of the Congregational Union. For over forty years was leading advocate of conditional immortality.

*Life in Christ*, 1846

*That Unknown Country* (Symposium)

*Immortality, a Clerical Symposium*

In 1883 he declared:

I steadfastly maintain, after forty years of study of the matter, that it is the notion of the infliction of a torment in body and soul that shall be absolutely endless, which alone gives a foot of standing ground to Ingersoll in America, or Bradlaugh in England. I believe more firmly than ever that it is a doctrine as contrary to every line of the Bible as it is contrary to every moral instinct of humanity.—Introduction to J. H. Pettingell's *The Unspeakable Gift* (1884), p. 22.

In the following year he added:

The Old Testament is consistent throughout with the belief of the eternal life of the servants of God, and of the eternal destruction of the wicked. And it is consistent, when taken in its simple sense with no other belief. . . .

The Gospels and Epistles with equal pertinacity adhere almost uniformly to language respecting the doom of the unsaved which taken in its simple sense, teaches, as does the Old Testament, that they shall *die, perish, be destroyed, not see life*, but suffer *destruction, everlasting destruction, "destruction,"* says Christ, "of body and soul in Gehenna."—*Homiletic Monthly* (England), March, 1885.

DR. JOHN THOMAS (1805-1871), editor, *Apostolic Advocate*; founder of Christadelphians

(Final extinction of wicked; immortality a gift through Christ.)

H. H. DOBNEY (1809-1883), Baptist pastor, Maidstone, England

*Notes of Lectures on Future Punishment*, 1844

ARCHBISHOP RICHARD WHATELY (1787-1863), of Dublin; Oxford professor and principal

*A View of the Scriptural Revelations Concerning a Future State*

(The wicked are never spoken of as being kept alive, but as forfeiting life. Taught their final destruction.)

DEAN HENRY ALFORD (1810-1871), of Canterbury, Biblical scholar

*Greek New Testament*

(Eternal fixity and duration belong only to those who are in accordance with God.)

JAMES PANTON HAM, Congregationalist minister, Bristol

*Life and Death; or, The Theology of the Bible in Relation to Human Mortality*, 1849

CHARLES F. HUDSON (1821-1867), Congregationalist minister and Greek scholar

*Debt and Grace as Related to the Doctrine of a Future Life*, 1857

*Christ Our Life. The Scriptural Argument for Immortality Through Christ Alone*, 1860

DR. ROBERT W. DALE (1829-1895), Congregationalist

pastor, Carr's Lane Church, Birmingham; editor, *The Congregationalist*; chairman, Congregational Union of England and Wales; and president of the First International Council of Congregational Churches in 1891. He announced his acceptance of conditionalism in a paper before the Congregational Union of 1874.

Eternal life, as I believe, is the inheritance of those who are in Christ. Those who are not in Him will die the *Second Death* from which there will be no resurrection. . . .

I am not conscious that they [the positions of Conditionalism] have at all impaired the authority in my teaching of any of the great central doctrines of the Christian faith. The doctrine of the Trinity remains untouched; and the doctrine of the incarnation, and the doctrine of the atonement in its evangelical sense, and the doctrine of justification by faith, and the doctrine of judgment by works, and the doctrine of regeneration have received, I believe, from these conclusions a new and intenser illustration.— Recorded in Freer's *Edward White, His Life and Work* (1902), pp. 354, 355.

DEAN FREDERICK W. FARRAR (1831-1903), canon of Westminster Abbey; dean of Canterbury

*Eternal Hope*, 1877

*Faith and Mercy*

*Mercy and Judgment*, 1881

(Denounced dogma of endless, conscious suffering; could not find one single text in all Scripture that, when fairly interpreted, teaches the common views about endless torment.)

HERMANN OLSHAUSEN (1796-1839), professor of theology at Königsberg

*Biblical Commentary on the New Testament*, vol. 4, 1860

The *doctrine* of the immortality of the soul and the name are alike unknown in the entire Bible.—*Biblical Commentary on the New Testament* (1860), vol. 4, p. 381.

CANON HENRY CONSTABLE (died 1894), prebendary of Cork, Ireland

*Hades: or the Intermediate State of Man*

*Restitution of All Things*

*The Duration and Nature of Future Punishment*

(The immortality of the soul, and the name, are alike unknown in the entire Bible.)

WILLIAM E. GLADSTONE (1809-1898), British prime minister and theologian

*Studies Subsidiary to the Works of Bishop Butler*, 1896 ed.

In a searching criticism of Bishop Butler's *Analogy* and its defense of innate immortality, Gladstone contended:

[It is only] from the time of Origen that we are to regard the idea of natural, as opposed to that of Christian, immortality as beginning to gain a firm foothold in the Christian Church.—*Studies Subsidiary to the Works of Bishop Butler* (1896 ed.), p. 184.

The doctrine of natural, as distinguished from Christian, immortality had not been subjected to the severer tests of wide publicity and resolute controversy, but had crept into the Church, by a back door as it were; by a silent though effective process; and was in course of obtaining a title by tacit prescription.—*Ibid.*, p. 195.

Another consideration of the highest importance is that the natural immortality of the soul is a *doctrine wholly unknown to the Holy Scriptures*, and standing on no higher plane than that of an ingeniously sustained, but gravely and formidably contested, philosophical opinion.—*Ibid.*, p. 197.

The character of the Almighty is rendered liable to charges

which cannot be repelled so long as the idea remains that there may by His ordinance be such a thing as never-ending punishment, but that it will have been sufficiently vindicated at the bar of human judgment, so soon as it has been established and allowed that punishment, whatever else it may be, cannot be never-ending.—*Ibid.*, p. 241.

JOSEPH PARKER (1830-1902), Congregationalist, pastor,  
the City Temple, London

*People's Bible*, vol. 1, on Genesis

Glorious to me is this idea (so like all we know of the Divine goodness) of asking man whether he will accept life and be like God, or whether he will choose death and darkness for ever. God does not say to man, "I will make you immortal and indestructible whether you will or not; live for ever you shall." No; he makes him capable of living; he constitutes him with a view to immortality; he urges, beseeches, implores him to work out this grand purpose, assuring him, with infinite pathos, that he has no pleasure in the death of the sinner, but would rather that he should LIVE. A doctrine this which in my view simplifies and glorifies human history as related in the Bible. Life and death are not set before any *beast*; but life and death are distinctly set before *man*—he can live, he was meant to live, he is besought to live; the whole scheme of Providence and redemption is arranged to help him to live—why, then, will ye die?—*The People's Bible*, vol. 1, p. 126.

Discussing the ultimate banishment of sin from the universe, Parker adds:

By destroying evil I do not mean locking it up by itself in a moral prison, which shall be enlarged through ages and generations until it shall become the abode of countless millions of rebels, but its utter, final, everlasting extinction, so that at last the universe shall be "without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing"—the pure home of a pure creation.—*Ibid.*, p. 160.

Commenting on the "Destruction of Sodom," Parker denies that "in giving life God has put it absolutely out of his own power to reclaim or withdraw it." He comments on the implications:

Having once given you life you are as immortal as he himself is, and you can defy him to interfere with his own work! The doctrine seems to me to involve a palpable absurdity, and hardly to escape the charge of blasphemy. Throughout the whole Bible, God has reserved to himself the right to take back whatever he has given, because all his gifts have been offered upon conditions about which there can be no mistake.—*Ibid.*, p. 222.

In this case [of Sodom] we have an instance of utter and everlasting destruction. We see here what is meant by “everlasting punishment,” for we are told in the New Testament that “Sodom suffered the vengeance of eternal fire,” that is of fire, which made an utter end of its existence and perfectly accomplished the purpose of God. The “fire” was “eternal,” yet Sodom is not literally burning still; the smoke of its torment, being the smoke of an eternal fire, ascended up for ever and ever, yet no smoke now rises from the plain,—“eternal fire” does not involve the element of what we call “time”: it means thorough, absolute, complete, final: that which is done or given once for all.—*Ibid.*, p. 223.

BISHOP JOHN J. S. PEROWNE (1823-1904), Hebrew scholar, Anglican bishop of Worcester

*Hulsean Lectures on Immortality*, 1868

The immortality of the soul is neither argued nor affirmed in the Old Testament.—*Hulsean Lectures on Immortality*, p. 31.

The immortality of the soul is a phantom which eludes your eager grasp.—*Ibid.*

SIR GEORGE G. STOKES (1820-1903), professor of mathematics, Cambridge; president of Royal Society; M. P.

*That Unknown Country (A Symposium)*, 1889  
*Immortality, a Clerical Symposium*

It was natural that, after the forfeiture of immortality through transgression, man should seek to satisfy his craving for immortality by imagining that he had something immortal in his

nature. It is, then, to revelation that we must look, if we are to find out something about man's condition in the intermediate state.—*That Unknown Country*, p. 829.

Man's whole being was forfeited by the Fall, and the future life is not his birthright, but depends on a supernatural dispensation of grace. To look to man's bodily frame for indications of immortality, to look even to his lofty mental powers—lofty, indeed, but sadly misused—is to seek the living among the dead. Man must look not into himself, but out of himself for assurance of immortality.—*Immortality, a Clerical Symposium*, p. 123.

DR. W. A. BROWN (1865-1943), of Union Seminary,  
New York

*The Christian Hope*, 1912

(From Israel came the doctrine of the resurrection, and of the advent; from Greece, the doctrine of natural immortality.)

DR. J. AGAR BEET (1840-1924), Wesleyan professor

*Last Things*

Preface to *The Immortality of the Soul: A Protest*,  
5th ed., 1902

The following pages are . . . a protest against a doctrine which, during long centuries, has been almost universally accepted as divine truth taught in the Bible, but which seems to me altogether alien to it in both phrase and thought, and derived only from Greek Philosophy. Until recent times, this alien doctrine has been comparatively harmless. But, as I have here shown, it is now producing most serious results. . . .

It will of course be said, of this as of some other doctrines, that, if not explicitly taught in the Bible, it is implied and assumed there. . . . They who claim for their teaching the authority of God must prove that it comes from Him. Such proof in this case, I have never seen.—*The Immortality of the Soul* (5th ed., 1902), Preface.

DR. R. F. WEYMOUTH (1822-1902), headmaster of Mill Hill School, translator of *New Testament in Modern Speech*

My mind fails to conceive a grosser misrepresentation of language than when five or six of the strongest words which the Greek tongue possesses, signifying to *destroy* or *destruction*, are explained to mean "maintaining an everlasting but wretched existence." To translate black as white is nothing to this.—Cited by Edward White in *Life in Christ* (1878), p. 365.

*New Testament in Modern Speech*, note on 1 Corinthians 15:18:

By "perish" the Apostle here apparently means "pass out of existence."\*

On Hebrews 9:28:

The use in the N.T. of such words as "death," "destruction," "fire," "perish," to describe Future Retribution, point to the likelihood of fearful anguish, followed by extinction of being, as the doom which awaits those who by persistent rejection of the Saviour prove themselves utterly, and therefore irremediably, bad.\*

On Revelation 14:11:

There is nothing in this verse that necessarily implies an eternity of suffering. In a similar way the word "punishment" or "correction" in Matt. xxv. 46 gives in itself no indication of time.

On Revelation 20:10:

*The Lake of fire]* Implying awful pain and complete, irremediable ruin and destruction.\*

DR. LYMAN ABBOTT (1835-1922), Congregationalist pastor, and editor, *Christian Union* and *The Outlook*

*That Unknown Country (Symposium)*, 1889

Outside of the walls of Jerusalem, in the valley of Gehenna,

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\*Notes by Earnest Hampden-Cook, editor and reviser of third edition of *The New Testament in Modern Speech*, by Richard Francis Weymouth.

was kept perpetually burning a fire, on which the offal of the city was thrown to be destroyed. This is the hell fire of the New Testament. Christ warns his auditors that persistence in sin will make them offal to be cast out from the holy city, to be destroyed. The worm that dieth not was the worm devouring the carcasses, and is equally clearly a symbol not of torture but of destruction.

—*That Unknown Country*, p. 72.

The notion that the final punishment of sin is continuance in sin and suffering is also based in part on, what seems to me, a false philosophy as to man. This philosophy is that man is by nature immortal. The conviction has grown on me, that according to the teaching both of science and Scripture, man is by nature an animal, and like all other animals mortal; that immortality belongs only to the spiritual life; and that spiritual life is possible only in communion and contact with God; that, in short, immortality was not conferred upon the race in creation whether it would or no, but is conferred in redemption, upon all those of the race who choose life and immortality through Jesus Christ our Lord.—*Ibid.*

DR. EDWARD BEECHER (1803-1895), Congregationalist theologian; president, Illinois College

*Doctrine of Scriptural Retribution*

It [the Bible] does not recognize, nay, it expressly denies the natural and inherent immortality of the soul. It assures us that God only hath immortality. (1 Tim. vi, 16). By this we understand that He has immortality in the highest sense—that is, inherent immortality. All existence besides Himself He created, and He upholds. Men are not, as Plato taught, self-existent, eternal beings, immortal in their very nature. . . . There is no inherent immortality of the soul as such. What God created He sustains in being, and can annihilate at will.—*Doctrine of Scriptural Retribution*, p. 58.

DR. EMMANUEL PÉTAVEL-OLLIFF (1836-1910), Swiss theologian; lecturer, University of Geneva

*The Struggle for Eternal Life (La Fin du Mal)*

*The Extinction of Evil, 1889*

*The Problem of Immortality*

DR. FRANZ DELITZSCH (1813-1890), Hebraist, professor, Rostock, Erlangen, Leipsic

*A New Commentary on Genesis*

There is nothing in all the Bible which implies a native immortality.—Comment on Gen. 3:22.

From the Biblical point of view the soul can be put to death, it is mortal.—Comment on Num. 23:10.

BISHOP CHARLES J. ELЛИCOTT (1820-1905), of Bristol, chairman, English Revision Committee

*The Ceylon Evangelist*, October, 1893

It seems inconceivable that when God is all in all, there should be some dark spot, where amid endless self-inflicted suffering, or in the enhancement of ever-enduring hate, rebel hands should be forever raised against the Eternal Father and God of Everlasting Love.—*The Ceylon Evangelist*, October, 1893.

DR. GEORGE DANA BOARDMAN (1828-1903), pastor, First Baptist Church of Philadelphia; established Boardman Foundation of Christian Ethics, University of Pennsylvania

*Studies in the Creative Week*, 1880

Writing on the issue of immortality he states:

Not a single passage of Holy Writ, from Genesis to Revelation, teaches, so far as I am aware, the doctrine of Man's natural immortality. On the other hand, Holy Writ emphatically declares that God only hath immortality (1 Tim. vi. 16): that is to say: God alone is naturally, inherently, in His own essence and nature, immortal.—*Studies in the Creative Week*, pp. 215, 216.

If, then, Man is immortal, it is because immortality has been bestowed on him. He is immortal, not because he was created so, but because he has become so, deriving his deathlessness from Him Who alone hath immortality. And of this fact the Tree of

Life in the midst of the Garden seems to have been the appointed symbol and pledge. That this is the meaning of the Tree of Life is evident from the closing words of the Archive of the Fall: "Jehovah God said: 'Behold, the Man hath become as one of Us, to know good and evil; and now, lest he stretch forth his hand, and take also of the Tree of Life, and eat, and live forever:' therefore Jehovah God drove the Man forth from Eden, and stationed on the East of the Garden the Cherubim, and the Flaming Sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the Tree of Life" (Gen. iii. 22-24). If Man is inherently immortal, what need was there of any Tree of Life at all? This much, then, seems to be clear: Immortality was somehow parabolically conditioned on the eating of this mysterious Tree, and the Immortality was for the entire Man—spirit and soul and body.—*Ibid.*, p. 216.

J. H. PETTINGELL (1815-1887), Congregationalist, district secretary of Congregationalist Board of Foreign Missions

*The Theological Trilemma (Endless Misery)  
Universal Salvation, or Conditional Immortality,*  
1878

*Platonism versus Christianity*, 1881

*The Life Everlasting: What Is It? Whence Is It?  
Whose Is It?* 1882

*The Unspeakable Gift*, 1884

It is worthy of remark, that the doctrine of eternal torment is found neither in the Apostles' Creed, nor the Nicene Creed, nor in two of the principal Confessions of Faith of the sixteenth century, viz., the otherwise rigid Creed of the French Reformed Church and the Thirty-nine Articles of the Anglican Church. And we believe that if this dogma has been handed down throughout the Protestant Churches, it is simply as an inheritance from the errors of the middle ages and from the speculative theories of Platonism. If we examine the writings of the earlier Fathers, Barnabas, Clement of Rome, Hermas, Ignatius, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Theophilus of Antioch, Irenaeus, and Clement of Alexandria, we find them all faithful to the apostolic doctrine of the

final destruction of the wicked. The dogma of everlasting torment did not creep into the Church until she yielded to the influence of Platonic philosophy.—Pettingell's, *The Life Everlasting*, pp. 66, 67.

### Conferences on Conditionalism

In the nineteenth century, in addition to a great revival of individual exponents of conditionalism, conferences were held, such as the large London Conference on Conditional Immortality, May 15, 1876, with its published report. Convened under the chairmanship of Lieutenant-General Goodwyn, the attendance included such prominent adherents as Henry Constable, Edward White, Minton, Heard, Howard, Leask, Tilling, and Barrett, with messages from Dr. Pétavel of Switzerland, Dr. Weymouth of Mill Hill School, et cetera. The gist of the conference report was: "The Bible nowhere teaches an inherent immortality; but teaches that it is the object of redemption to impart it. . . . The communication of it requires a regeneration of man, by the Holy Spirit, and a resurrection of the dead."—Page 28. It declared that the enjoyment of immortality is *conditional*; and that those who will not return to God will die and perish everlasting. "Out of Christ there is no life eternal."

Dr. White there declared:

These are the ideas which have brought us together this morning. They are now firmly held by an immense multitude of thoughtful people of all lands, for although we are but a little company here assembled, we represent an immense army in Europe and America. These views are spreading every day amongst the churches; and number among their adherents some of the foremost men of science, theologians, missionaries, philologists, philosophers, preachers, and statesmen.—*Report, London Conference on Conditional Immortality*, pp. 28, 29.

**Important Symposiums Appear**

Several important symposiums—*Life Everlasting* (199 pages, 1882), with twenty contributors; *That Unknown Country* (943 pages, 1889), a pro and con discussion with 52 well-known contributors; and a third, *Immortality: a Symposium*, published in Britain—were all issued within a decade. These, appearing on both sides of the Atlantic, indicate the widespread inter-denominational and international interest in this vital theme. Note the first one, in 1882, published in Philadelphia.

**PETTINGELL'S "THE LIFE EVERLASTING" SYMPOSIUM.**—A 199-page symposium (appearing as a supplement to J. H. Pettingell's *The Life Everlasting* of 1882), was prepared by the following contributors:

Dr. Leonard Bacon, pastor, Park Congregational Church, Norwich, Conn.; Dr. Edward White, Congregationalist, St. Paul's Chapel, London; Samuel Minton, Anglican, Eaton Chapel, London; George R. Kramer, Independent pastor, Household of Faith Church, Wilmington, Del.; Joseph D. Wilson, rector, St. John's Reformed Episcopal Church, Chicago; A. A. Phelps, pastor, Congregational Church, Rochester, New York; editor, *The Bible Banner*; Dr. A. M. B. Graham, president Arkansas Christian Conference and president Christian Temperance Union of Arkansas; William B. Hart, layman, Philadelphia; Dr. Willam Leask, Congregationalist pastor, Maberly Chapel, London; editor, *The Rainbow*; Dr. Emmanuel Pétavel (Pétavel-Olliff), Geneva, Switzerland, author of *La Fin du Mal*, translated into English as *The Struggle for Eternal*

*Life*; J. H. Kellogg, M.D., superintendent of Battle Creek, Michigan, Sanitarium, author of *The Soul and the Resurrection*; Prof. D. H. Chase, Methodist, Middletown, Conn.; Charles Byse, pastor, Free Evangelical Church, Brussels, Belgium, and editor of *Eglise Chrétienne Missionnaire Belge* and *Journal du Protestantisme Francoise*; William Lang, author, Edinburgh; M. W. Strang, editor, *The Messenger*, Glasgow; Prof. Hermann Schutz, University of Göttingen, Germany, author of *Die Voraussetzungen der christlichen Lehre von der Unsterblichkeit* (The Principles of the Christian Doctrine of Immortality); Dr. Clement M. Butler, rector of Trinity Church, Washington, D.C., and professor of history, Episcopal Divinity School, Philadelphia; Dr. Matson Meier-Smith, Congregationalist pastor and professor of homiletics and pastoral cares, Episcopal Divinity School, Philadelphia; Canon Henry Constable, Anglican author, London; Dr. C. R. Hendrickson, pastor, Baptist Church, Jackson, Tenn.; Dr. W. R. Huntington, rector, All-Saints Church, Worcester, Mass.

DR. PHELPS' INDICTMENT OF INNATE IMMORTALITY.—Dr. Phelps, in discussing "Is Man by Nature Immortal?" (pp. 639-650), presents twelve counts against the doctrine of innate immortality:

1. It has a bad history; it was introduced by the serpent in Eden, and springs from a heathen philosophy; it is not found in Jewish belief; is a compromise with Platonism; adopted and authenticated by the Church of Rome.
2. It is at variance with the scriptural account of man's creation.
3. It clashes with the Bible statement of man's fall.

4. It is opposed to the scriptural doctrine of death.
5. It is equally opposed to physiological facts.
6. Immortality is nowhere ascribed to man in his present state of existence.
7. Immortality is a blessing to be sought, and not a birthright legacy.
8. Inherent immortality is opposed to the scriptural doom of the wicked.
9. It supersedes the necessity of a resurrection.
10. It reduces the judgment scene to a solemn farce.
11. It subverts the Bible doctrine of Christ's second coming.
12. It is a prolific source of error—Mohammedanism, Shakerism, Swedenborgianism, Spiritualism, Purgatory, Mariolatry, Universalism, Eternal-Tormentism.

### Twentieth Century

CANON WILLIAM H. M. HAY AITKEN (1841-1927), Anglican mission organizer

The doctrine of Eternal Torment has lost its hold on the common sense and moral sensibilities of mankind. People don't and won't believe that an infinitely good and merciful God can consign His own offspring (Acts xvii. 28, 29) to measureless aeons of torture in retribution for the sins and weaknesses of a few swiftly passing years here on earth.—Foreward, Eric Lewis' *Life and Immortality*, 1949, p. f.

ERIC LEWIS (1864-1948), Cambridge University, missionary to Sudan and India

*Life and Immortality*, 1949

*Christ, the First Fruits*, 1949

Lewis' summary:

1. That man is mortal. That immortality is not his by nature, but a gift of God to him in Christ, conditioned on faith and

obedience, the earnest of which immortality, is the indwelling Spirit of God. And this immortality is put on at the resurrection.

2. That at death, man's soul, his physical organism, dies, and the man returns to dust.

3. That at death, his spirit, which is not a personal entity apart from his body, returns to God who gave it, while the man himself passes into unconscious sleep until the resurrection.

4. That at resurrection, God calls the dead man back to life, breathing into him again His Spirit. . . . The resurrection body, given to the righteous at the coming of Christ, will be a spiritual body, a glorified body, like His own after His resurrection.

There will be a resurrection unto judgment, as well as unto life. Those whose names are not found written in the book of life, will be cast into the lake of fire, there to perish ultimately, burned up like the chaff. How long their sufferings will last, is known to God alone; His judgment will be according to the desert of each. This is "the second death," from which there will be no resurrection.—*Christ the First Fruits*, p. 79.

DR. WILLIAM TEMPLE (1881-1944), late Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of Great Britain

*Christian Faith and Life*, 1931; 16th impression,  
1954

*Drew Lecture on Immortality*, 1931  
*Nature, Man and God*, 1953

[The] doctrine of the future life [will] involve our first disentangling the authentic teaching of the classical Scriptures from accretions which very quickly began to obscure this.—*Nature, Man and God*, p. 460.

Man is not immortal by nature or of right; but he is capable of immortality and there is offered to him resurrection from the dead and life eternal if he will receive it from God and on God's terms.—*Ibid.*, p. 472.

Are there not, however, many passages which speak of the endless torment of the lost? No; as far as my knowledge goes, there is none at all.—*Ibid.*, p. 464.

After all, annihilation is an everlasting punishment though it is not unending torment.—*Ibid.*

One thing we can say with confidence: everlasting torment is to be ruled out. If men had not imported the Greek and unbiblical notion of the natural indestruction of the individual soul, and then read the New Testament with that already in their minds, they would have drawn from it a belief, not in everlasting torment, but in annihilation. It is the fire that is called aeonian, not the life cast into it.—*Christian Faith and Life*, p. 81.

How can there be the Paradise for any while there is Hell, conceived as unending torment, for some? Each supposedly damned soul was born into the world as a mother's child, and Paradise cannot be Paradise for her if her child is in such a Hell.—*Ibid.*, p. 454.

DR. GERARDUS VAN DER LEEUW (1890-1950), professor,  
University of Groningen

*Onsterfelijkheid of Opstanding* (Immortality or Resurrection), 1947

After quoting Eccl. 3:19-21, he comments:

[Innate] Immortality is a conception which fits into the philosophy of pantheism. With death belongs not immortality, but Resurrection.—*Onsterfelijkheid of Opstanding*, p. 30.

The Church has—no matter how much Hellenized it may be in doctrine and practice—always maintained the resurrection of the body. . . . The body dies, death is not being denied at all. Even the Spirit, the soul that I am, will not exist. The soul will also die. But the whole life of man will be renewed by God. God will raise me up “in the latter day.”—*Ibid.*, p. 32.

*God alone is immortal* (1 Tim. 6:16). *To man he has given the promise of Resurrection. . . .*

*Creation will change into re-creation. And re-creation is resurrection, a raising up by God.*—*Ibid.*, p. 36.

Many preachers of recent times are rather hesitant to preach about immortality. But in former days, when preaching about eternal life, it was without effort that they dwelt upon imaginations of a *corruptible body* and an *immortal soul*. The older devotional books and church hymns are full of it. Even now people in the house of bereavement and on the graveyards are being comforted from the same source—yet these representations

are not in any respect Christian, but purely Grecian and *contrary to the essence of Christian faith*.—*Ibid.*, p. 20.

DR. AUBREY R. VINE (1900- ), editor, *The Congregational Quarterly*; professor at Yorkshire United Independent College

*An Approach to Christology*, 1948

The natural immortality of the spirit is a Greek rather than a Christian concept.—*An Approach to Christology* (1948), p. 314.

Against the idea of the natural immortality of the spirit we must set the fact that God is the only self-existent and that nothing exists or continues to exist except by His grace and will, within this schema or within any other. God only is exoschematic. When we use the word "immortal," therefore, of anything but God, we must always realize that none but God is immortal by his own nature and without qualification.—*Ibid.*, p. 315.

"Immortal" should only be applied to a human spirit if we clearly recognize that it is only immortal at God's grace and pleasure. Only God is immortal by His own nature and without qualification.—*Ibid.*, p. 311, footnote.

DR. MARTIN J. HEINECKEN (n.d.), professor of systematic theology, Lutheran Theological Seminary, Philadelphia

*Basic Christian Teachings*, 1949

Speaking of man as a unit, he declares:

In the Biblical account of creation we are told that God formed man of the dust and of the earth, and that he then breathed into his nostrils and man became a living soul. This is usually interpreted to mean that God made a soul, which is the real person, and that he then gave this soul a temporary home in a body, made of the dust of the earth. But this is a false dualism. . . . Man must be considered a unity.—*Basic Christian Teachings*, pp. 36, 37.

We are dealing with a unified being, a person, and not with something that is called a soul and which dwells in a house called

the body, as though the body were just a tool for the soul to employ, but not really a part of the person.—*Ibid.*, p. 38.

Coming then to the issue of the immortality of the soul he says:

It is held by some people that there is within every man an unchanging and indestructible core, immortal in its own right. It is unaffected by time; it had no beginning, neither can it have an end. It has always been and always will be. It came into this world of changing things from the realm of eternity and will return to it.—*Ibid.*, p. 133.

The Christian view is by no means to be identified with the above belief in the immortality of the soul. The Christian belief is in the immortality of the God-relationship, and in the resurrection. The Christian dualism is not that of soul and body, eternal mind and passing things, but the dualism of Creator and creature. Man is a person, a unified being, a center of responsibility, standing over against his Creator and Judge. He has no life or immortality within himself. He came into being through God's creative power. He spends as many years on this earth as in God's providence are allotted to him. He faces death as the wages of sin.—*Ibid.*, pp. 133, 134.

Men have speculated like this: At death the soul is separated from the body. It appears then before God in a preliminary judgment (mentioned nowhere in Scripture) and enters into a preliminary state either of blessedness or condemnation. Then, when the last trumpet sounds, the body is resurrected and rejoined with the soul, and complete once more, the reunited body and soul appear for the final, public judgment scene, from there to enter either into final bliss or final condemnation. It is no wonder that, with this view, men have had little use for a resurrection, and have finally dropped the notion altogether and have been satisfied with the redemption of only the soul.—*Ibid.*, p. 135.

To die then means to pass to the resurrection and the judgment at the end of time. Even if someone should say that all men sleep until the final trumpet sounds, what is the passage of time for those who are asleep? The transition from the moment of death to the resurrection would still be instantaneous for them. It would be no different from going to bed at night and being waked in the morning.—*Ibid.*, p. 136.

DAVID R. DAVIES (1889- ), rector, St. Mary Magdalén, St. Leonard-on-Sea, Britain

*The Art of Dodging Repentance, 1952*

The soul of man is not necessarily automatically immortal. It is capable of being destroyed. The Bible offers no ground whatsoever for believing that the soul is immune from death and destruction. The soul *can* be destroyed.

The immortality of the soul is not a Biblical doctrine, but Greek philosophy. The Biblical doctrine about the soul is the resurrection from the dead. Man is a created being. God created him out of nothing. Man was created for immortality, but by his own rebellion against God he made himself mortal.—*The Art of Dodging Repentance* (1952), p. 84.

The idea of the immortality of the soul derives from Greek philosophy which conceived the after-life of Hades, a ghostly, shadowy underworld, in which the soul lived a twilight existence. We have translated the Greek word, Hades, by our English word Hell, which we think of as a place of pain and torment. But the Greek Hades was not a place of torment. Hell as torment is derived more from the Hebrew Gehenna than from the Greek Hades, which was a lower, shadowy existence, denuded of passion and suffering. It was the product of the Greek view of men as a compound of matter and soul, which death severed, releasing the soul from the prison-house of matter into an independent existence.

The Hebrew view of man was entirely different. In the Bible man is regarded as a unity of "life" or spirit, which manifests itself as both soul and body. Since man has made himself mortal, his soul, in consequence, also partakes of mortality. Man is not a compound of two separate entities, matter and spirit, but a unity of spirit functioning as matter and soul. It is the unity that is mortal.—*Ibid.*, pp. 84, 85.

DR. BASIL F. C. ATKINSON, under-librarian of Cambridge University

*The Pocket Commentary of the Bible, Part One: Book of Genesis, 1954*

Comment on Gen. 2:7:

It has sometimes been thought that the impartation of the life principle, as it is brought before us in this verse, entailed immortality of the spirit or soul. It has been said that to be made in the image of God involves immortality. The Bible never says so. If it involves immortality, why does it not also involve omniscience or omnipresence, or any other quality or attribute of the Infinite? Why should one alone be singled out? The breath of life was not breathed into man's heart, but into his nostrils. It involved physical life. Throughout the Bible man, apart from Christ, is conceived of as made of dust and ashes, a physical creature, to whom is lent by God a principle of life. The Greek thinkers tended to think of man as an immortal soul imprisoned in a body. This emphasis is the opposite to that of the Bible, but has found a wide place in Christian thought.—*The Pocket Commentary of the Bible*, Part 1, Book of Genesis, p. 32.

DR. EMIL BRUNNER (1889- ), professor of systematic and practical theology, University of Zurich, guest professor at Princeton, and International Christian University, Tokyo

*Eternal Hope* (English translation by Harold Knight), 1954

After discussing the widespread, historic concept of the "survival of the soul after death" as "the separation of soul from body," he states:

For the history of Western thought, the Platonic teaching of the immortality of the soul became of special significance. It penetrated so deeply into the thought of Western man because, although with certain modifications, it was assimilated by Christian theology and church teaching, was even declared by the Lateran Council of 1512 [1513] to be a dogma, to contradict which was a heresy.—*Eternal Hope*, p. 100.

Then he adds:

Only recently, as a result of a deepened understanding of the New Testament, have strong doubts arisen as to its compatibility with the Christian conception of the relation between God and man.—*Ibid.*

According to Platonism:

The body is mortal, the soul immortal. The mortal husk conceals this eternal essence which in death is freed from its outer shell.—*Ibid.*, p. 101.

After observing that “this dualistic conception of man does not correspond to the Christian outlook,” he then remarks:

Since this mode of robbing evil of its sting runs necessarily parallel with the rendering innocuous of death through the teaching about immortality, this solution of the problem of death stands in irreconcilable opposition to Christian thought.—*Ibid.*

Commenting further on the “doctrine of the immortality of the soul” (p. 105), which medieval Christianity “took over” from “Greek philosophy,” he observes that it was “utterly foreign to its [Christianity’s] own essential teaching.” And he adds:

The opinion that we men are immortal because our soul is of an indestructible, because divine, essence is, once for all, irreconcilable with the Biblical view of God and man.—*Ibid.*, pp. 105, 106.

The philosophical belief in immortality is like an echo, both reproducing and falsifying the primal Word of this divine Creator. It is false because it does not take into account the real loss of this original destiny through sin.—*Ibid.*, p. 107.

DR. REINHOLD NIEBUHR (1892- ), professor at Union Theological Seminary

*The Nature and Destiny of Man* (Scribners), 1955  
(Gifford Lectures at Edinburgh, 1939)

After contrasting the “classical” view of man, of Graeco-Roman antiquity, and the “Biblical” view, Niebuhr states that the two “were actually merged in the thought of medieval Catholicism.”—*The Nature and Destiny of Man*, vol. 1, p. 5. The classical view, that the

“mind” or “spirit” is “immortal” was inseparably tied to the dualistic concept of man (p. 7). But among the Hebrews, he observes,

the concept of an immortal mind in a mortal body remains unknown to the end.—*Ibid.*, p. 13.

Origen’s Platonism completely destroys the Biblical sense of the unity of man.—*Ibid.*, p. 153, footnote.

Gregory’s [of Nyssa] thoroughly Platonic conception of the relation of the soul to the body is vividly expressed in his metaphor of the gold and the alloy.—*Ibid.*, p. 172.

The idea of the resurrection of the body is a Biblical symbol in which modern minds take the greatest offense and which has long since been displaced in most modern versions of the Christian faith by the idea of the immortality of the soul. The latter idea is regarded as a more plausible expression of the hope of everlasting life.—*Ibid.*, vol. 2, p. 294.

The resurrection is not a human possibility in the sense that the immortality of the soul is thought to be so. All the plausible and implausible proofs for the immortality of the soul are efforts on the part of the human mind to master and to control the consummation of life. They all try to prove in one way or another that an eternal element in the nature of man is worthy and capable of survival beyond death.”—*Ibid.*, p. 295.

The Christian hope of the consummation of life and history is less absurd than alternate doctrines which seek to comprehend and to effect the completion of life by some power or capacity inherent in man and his history.—*Ibid.*, p. 298.

DR. T. A. KANTONEN (1900- ), Lutheran professor, Hamma Divinity School, American Member Lutheran World Federation Commission on Theology  
*The Christian Hope*, 1954

The influence of Hellenic philosophy, represented by the Alexandrian fathers in particular, tended to spiritualize eschatology into a continuing inner purification and immortality of the soul.—*The Christian Hope*, p. 20.

Primitive animism with its notion of a detachable ghost-soul which continues after death to lead a shadowy existence and to enter interaction with the living still underlies much of popular

religious thinking on the subject. More important and influential from the theological point of view is the Greek idea of the immortality of the soul which found its classical formulation in Plato's dialogues four centuries before Christ. Since Platonism furnished the sublimest thought forms for the formative period of Christian theology, it is not surprising that many of the Fathers identified the Christian doctrine of eternal life with Platonic immortality and that finally the Fifth Lateran Council (1512-17) adopted it as a dogma of the church.—*Ibid.*, p. 27.

It has been characteristic of Western thought ever since Plato to distinguish sharply between the soul and the body. The body is supposed to be composed of matter, and the soul of spirit. The body is a prison from which the soul is liberated at death to carry on its own proper nonphysical existence. Because of its immaterial spiritual nature the soul has been considered indestructible. Hence the question of life after death has been the question of demonstrating the immortality, the death-defying capacity, of the soul. The body is of little consequence.

This way of thinking is entirely foreign to the Bible. True to Scripture and definitely rejecting the Greek view, the Christian creed says, not "I believe in the immortality of the soul," but "I believe in the resurrection of the body."—*Ibid.*, p. 28.

The soul is not a separate part of man, constituting a substance of its own.—*Ibid.*, p. 29.

"The Christian faith knows nothing about an immortality of the person. That would mean a denial of death, not recognizing it as judgment of God. It knows only an awakening from real death through the power of God. There is existence after death only by way of awakening, resurrection."\* There is no immortality of the soul but a resurrection of the whole person, body and soul, from death. The only immortality which the Bible recognizes is the immortality of a personal relationship with God in Christ.—*Ibid.*, p. 33.

The Bible does not distinguish between man and the beasts on the ground that man has an immortal soul while the beasts do not. Men, beasts, even plants, are alike in death. We do not need to concern ourselves about spiritualism or hypotheses of any kind concerning future existence. The whole matter of death and life after death is simplified when our only concern is faith in God

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\*From Paul Althaus, *Die letzten Dinge* (Gutersloh: Bertelsmann, 1933), p. 126.

who can destroy and who can resurrect. Life makes no sense and holds no hope except in terms of Christ's victory over death and the assurance that we share in that victory.

There is considerable support in Scripture for the view that the soul as well as the body is destructible. This evidence has been obscured because the Greek conception of the inherent immortality of the soul has supplanted the teaching of Scripture.—*Ibid.*, p. 34.

There are two indisputable realities in the scriptural doctrine, the fact of death and the fact of resurrection from the dead at Christ's second coming. But between the death of an individual and the return of Christ is an interval, which from the human point of view, in the case of most men, is a long period of time.—*Ibid.*, p. 36.

Against such speculation [Roman Catholic purgatory, Limbo, etc.] Protestant orthodoxy has, on the whole, denied all conceptions of a neutral state of waiting and held that souls pass immediately into a state of misery or of blessedness.—*Ibid.*, p. 37.

If death means entrance into heaven, then resurrection and judgment lose their significance.—*Ibid.*, p. 38.

The soul has no existence apart from the body. The whole man, body and soul dies, and the whole man, body and soul, is resurrected on the last day. At death man proceeds directly to the final resurrection and judgment. There is no period of waiting, for waiting implies time, and beyond death time no longer has any significance. From our own temporal point of view we may speak of the dead as being asleep and then say with Luther that for one in deep slumber the passage of centuries is as an instant. We may even say that departed believers are at home with the Lord in the sense that their striving and waiting are over and they have reached their final goal.—*Ibid.*, pp. 96, 97.\*

An alternative solution is that the fate of the wicked is neither eventual redemption nor endless torment but simply annihilation. Eternal death would conform to the New Testament connotation of death in general, *apoleia*, destruction. Proponents of this view claim that the idea of eternal punishment rests on the Platonic conception of the inherent indestructibility of the soul and that the reasoning used to disprove it applies here also. On

\*Dr. Kantonen has since modified his view, according with Walter Kuenneth (*Theologie der Auferstehung*) that the dead are not non-existent. (See p. 39.)

this ground the nature of God also appears to be vindicated.—*Ibid.*, p. 107.

When Christ, then, in the end destroys “every rule and every authority and power,” he will wipe out every vestige of opposition to God, both human and superhuman. This view, unlike universal restoration, preserves the twofold judgment taught in Scripture. And to be completely cut off from God, the source of life, would seem logically to imply nonexistence. Such a lapse into nothingness of all of life’s hopes and values makes perdition a terrible reality even without the added feature of prolonged torture.—*Ibid.*, p. 108.

The hope of the individual Christian at death does not lie in man’s power to defy death but in God’s power to raise man from the dead. Death is real, and man has no inherent capacity to leap over the grave into another existence.—*Ibid.*, p. 111.

The ultimate significance of Christ’s triumph over death will become manifest in the resurrection of the dead.—*Ibid.*, p. 112.

DR. D. R. G. OWEN, professor of religious knowledge,  
Trinity College; lecturer, philosophy and religion,  
Wycliffe College, Toronto

*Body and Soul*, 1956

The points at issue revolve around the concepts of “body” and “soul.” The “religious” anthropology [in contradistinction to the Biblical] adopts an extreme dualism, asserting that the body and the soul are two different and distinct substances. It claims that the soul is divine in origin and immortal by nature and that the corruptible body is the source of all sin and wickedness. It recommends the cultivation of the soul in detachment from the body, and advocates the suppression of all physical appetites and natural impulses. It regards the body as the tomb or prison of the soul from which it longs to get free. Finally, it tends to suppose that the soul, even in its earth-bound existence, is entirely independent of the body and so enjoys a freedom of choice and action untrammelled by the laws that reign in the physical realm.—*Body and Soul*, p. 26. (Copyright, 1956, by U. L. Jenkins, The Westminster Press. Used by permission.)

If we turn to the Bible, however, as we shall later, we find that a quite different view of man is assumed throughout. Here

there is no dualism and scarcely any idea of the immortality of a detached and independent soul.—*Ibid.*, p. 29.

Plato remains to the end an antiphysical dualist. It is he, and his followers, who most of all are responsible for imposing the "religious" anthropology on Western thought.—*Ibid.*, p. 41.

This latter belief especially—the idea that the soul can exist apart from the body—obviously implies some form of body-soul dualism. . . . This body-soul dualism was a necessary implicate of the Greek doctrine of the immortality of the soul.—*Ibid.*, p. 59.

Now there are a few isolated Scriptural passages that may suggest the idea of the immortality of the soul in the Greek sense, but the normal Biblical point of view is quite different: in the New Testament it is the resurrection of the body that is stressed, and this doctrine is almost a direct contradiction of the "Orphic" eschatology. Why, then, did the Fathers lean toward this largely un-Biblical notion?—*Ibid.*

The fact is that the Fathers' adoption of the "religious" idea of the immortality of the detachable soul forced them into the doctrine of body-soul dualism.—*Ibid.*, p. 61.

The idea of the intermediate state eventually developed into the doctrine of purgatory.—*Ibid.*

The Fathers were no doubt impressed by the force of the arguments advanced by Greek philosophy to prove the immortality of the soul. And, finally, of course, the idea of an intermediate state gave the human being another chance to be purged of his sins before the last judgment. It was the development of this notion that led to the doctrine of purgatory, with all the superstitions and objectionable practices that eventually made up the purgatorial system and, in the end, furnished part of the immediate cause of the Reformation.—*Ibid.*, p. 62.

Their [Church Fathers] resulting anthropology was a mixture of Biblical and Greek ideas. They added to the New Testament doctrine of the resurrection of the body the idea of an intermediate state in which the soul exists apart from the body, awaiting its recovery at the end.—*Ibid.*, p. 77.

The "religious" anthropology, as far as Western thought is concerned, is Greek and not Biblical in origin. It is also typical of Eastern religions in general, such as Hinduism and Buddhism. It seems to be characteristically "religious," and for this and other reasons has tended to creep into and corrupt the Christian view of man. This happened, as we saw, in the patristic and medieval

periods, and modern Catholicism and Protestantism have tended to perpetuate this early mistake.—*Ibid.*, p. 163.

The Biblical view of man is entirely different from the "religious."—*Ibid.*, p. 164.

The idea of the immortality of the soul in the Greek sense may be suggested in some passages in the wisdom literature and is definitely found in places in the Apocrypha. This line of thought was later developed in the Hellenistic Judaism of the Alexandrine School, in the inter-Testamental period, of which the religious philosopher Philo is the outstanding example.—*Ibid.*, p. 178.

Such are some of the host of advocates of conditional immortality, or life only in Christ, and/or of the ultimate destruction of unrepentant sinners.



## **X. Miscellaneous Questions**



# Intent of the Term “Everlasting Gospel”

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## QUESTION 45

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*What do Adventists mean by their constant emphasis on the “everlasting gospel” of Revelation 14:6? Is this a special gospel you are seeking to preach, which differs from the gospel emphasized by Protestants generally? Please clarify.*

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We do not understand the “everlasting gospel” of Revelation 14:6 to be a new or different gospel from that which our Lord, the apostles, and the early church preached, and which is to be re-emphasized in worldwide proportions in these latter days. It is the same unchanged and unchangeable good news that God has conveyed to man ever since sin entered the world, though discerned with varying degrees of clarity and emphasis in different ages.

Its foregleams were first seen in the promise of the “seed,” a promise given while man was still within the gates of Eden (Gen. 3:15). The gospel, according to Holy Writ, was even preached to Abraham: “And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed” (Gal. 3:8).

The apostle Peter referred to this same gospel when he wrote: "Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" (1 Peter 1:10, 11).

Clearly, then, that which was preached before the cross was gospel, but in figure, in type, in shadow. The full revelation came in and through Jesus Christ. Thus we read: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son" (Heb. 1:1, 2).

But a grave departure from the faith—a tragic and basic "falling away" from the pure apostolic gospel faith—developed in the great Latin apostasy, the dominant papal perversion of the Middle Ages. Yet, this was all expressly foretold by the apostle Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2:3-10:

Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day [the coming of the Lord and our gathering unto Him, verses 1, 2] shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things?

And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: even him, whose coming is

after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.

In due time the Protestant Reformation arose, which was a noble revival of much of the gospel that had been perverted and lost. The great basic principle of the gospel—justification by faith—was restored, and simple dependence upon the once-for-all atoning sacrifice and all-sufficient mediatorial priesthood of Jesus Christ was reinstated. Many papal perversions\* were repudiated and abandoned.

While there was a glorious return to most of the gospel, the faith once delivered to the saints, yet certain aspects of the gospel message were not emphasized at that time. These included baptism by immersion, immortality as a gift bestowed by Christ at the resurrection, revival of the seventh day as the Sabbath, and various other Bible truths.

We, as Adventists, profoundly believe that in these last days God is calling for the completion of the arrested Protestant Reformation and for the full and final restoration of gospel truth. Just as the Baptists arose in the seventeenth century to emphasize, among other forgotten and trampled truths, baptism by immersion, and as the eighteenth-century Wesleyans stressed God's free grace, so today, we believe, the Christian church is being called to return to the full, original, untainted gospel—the "everlasting gospel," unchanged and un-

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\*These include: Prayers for the dead, the sign of the cross, veneration of saints, celebration of the mass, worship of Mary, purgatory, veneration of relics, penance, holy water, celibacy of the priesthood, the rosary, the inquisition, transubstantiation, extreme unction, dependence upon tradition.

changeable in the plan and purpose of God. This, as we understand it, is all involved in the preparation of the church of the last days to meet her returning Lord.

This same principle of adherence to the everlasting gospel also involves rejection of all ecclesiastical departures and innovations of "latter times," that were likewise foretold by the same apostle Paul, for we read: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils" (1 Tim. 4:1). The portrayal of this peril is developed in 2 Timothy 3 and 4, where it is prophesied that "perilous times" will come, in which men will have "a form of godliness," but will deny "the power thereof" (2 Tim. 3:1-5).

This is the time foretold when men "will not endure sound doctrine" and will "turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Tim. 4:3, 4). Surely this is a portrayal of the sundry isms, pseudo-Christian movements, and religious perversions of the times that claim sanctuary within the general fold of Protestantism. And this is not to mention modernism—the great departure in Protestantism—evolution, the "social gospel," spiritism, the denial of the inspiration of the Bible, the denial of the deity of the Son of God, and other subtle religious philosophies of the day. Against all these historic and current enticements we are warned (Gal. 1:8, 9). We are to hold steadfastly to the apostolic faith and sound doctrine, and to the true gospel, based on the Bible only, as presented by Christ, and Paul, and the other apostles (1 Tim. 4:13-16; 2 Tim. 3:14-16).

In the history of the church there have been special

emphases and applications of the truth of the gospel suited to specific periods. This was true prior to and in the days of Jesus, in the days of the early church, during the Middle Ages, and in the Reformation period, and now it is true in these last days. These spiritual emphases constitute present truths to the generation to which they are given (2 Peter 1:12). We believe that we are now living in the hour, or time, of God's judgment. We therefore believe there is to be a fullness of understanding and emphasis corresponding to the fullness of time's last hour. We believe in a purity of faith matching the expectations of God for His people in these last climactic days of earth's history, when the redeemed are soon to meet their Lord face to face.

So, if Seventh-day Adventists seem to differ in emphasis from some of our brethren of other Protestant faiths, it is because we believe we have a special message for this hour. We hold the "everlasting gospel" of Revelation 14:6 to be the apostolic gospel, *understood and emphasized in the setting of God's great last-day judgment hour*, and designed for the preparation of a people completely clad in the righteousness of Christ and fully following the revealed will of God as they prepare to stand in His presence at His imminent glorious appearing.

# Satan, Demons, and Angels

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## QUESTION 46

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*What do Adventists believe regarding angels and demons? Do you consider them to be the departed spirits of the dead? And what about the devil—is he a personality, or simply an evil influence; a reality, or a myth?*

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Seventh-day Adventists uniformly believe that angels are created beings of an order higher than man (Heb. 2:7). They were created before man, and by the Son of God (Col. 1:16). They are greater in power and might than man (2 Peter 2:11). They are glorious beings (Matt. 28:2, 3), and heaven is their abode (Matt. 18:10).

We understand that they form part of the “whole family” of God “in heaven and earth” (Eph. 3:14, 15). Different orders of angels are named, such as cherubim and seraphim (Eze. 10:19, 20; Isa. 6:2, 6). And the apostle Paul refers to principalities, powers, rulers of this world, and spiritual hosts of wickedness (Eph. 6:12; compare Col. 2:15). Some of the angels were led into rebellion, and as a result were cast out of heaven (2 Peter 2:4). These fallen angels are called demons, “devils,” or “unclean spirits” (Matt. 8:16, 28-32; Mark 5:13; 1 Cor. 10:20, 21).

As to Satan, or the devil, we hold the uniform teach-

ing of the Word to be that he is definitely a personal being—the supreme adversary of God and man. Christ called him the “wicked one” (Matt. 13:19). He was, however, once an angel of light, the highest of the angels. He was named “Lucifer, son of the morning” (Isa. 14:12-14). But he fell from his high estate (Eze. 28:13-18; Luke 10:18; John 8:44), and drew down with him a host of angels, first into disaffection and then into open rebellion against God and His government (2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6). He is now the prince of devils (Matt. 12:24), and heads an opposing kingdom, with legions of evil angels, in deadly conflict with the kingdom of God and Christ (Rev. 12:7-10).

Thus we believe Satan to be but a created being, though of the highest rank. He was once called the “anointed cherub that covereth” (Eze. 28:14). He was described as “full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty” (verse 12). He was the embodiment of created perfection, and apparently led the worship of the universe. He was in the “mountain of God,” where God manifests His glory, and was “perfect” in his ways until “iniquity” developed in him (verses 14, 15). His heart became lifted up because of his beauty, and his wisdom was corrupted because of his brightness (verse 17). Unholy ambition and jealousy ruined him, and he led a host of angels in rebellion against God and Christ (Rev. 12:7-9). As a result he was “cast” out of the mountain of God (Eze. 28:16), and down to the “ground,” or earth (verse 17; Isa. 14:12). He is now leader of the realm of demons (Luke 11:14-18, A.R.V.).

This celestial being, who “abode not in the truth” (John 8:44), appeared in “Eden the garden of God”

(Eze. 28:13), and accomplished the fall of Adam and Eve by insinuating doubt as to God's word and His goodness (Gen. 3:1-5). Adam fell and death came as a consequence of his sin and disobedience (Rom. 5:12). Satan, as the arch tempter, goes "to and fro in the earth" (Job 1:7; compare 1 Peter 5:8), which is now the field of his special activity. He is the cause of sin with its fruitage of sickness and death (Eze. 28:15; Luke 13:16; John 8:44; Acts 10:38; Heb. 2:14).

In contrast to Christ, the "Holy One" (Acts 2:27; 13:35), Satan is called the "wicked one" (Matt. 13:19). He is the embodiment of consummate wickedness. He was the original sinner, and is the father of lies (John 8:44). He is called the "prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2), the "prince of this world" (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11), the "god of this world" (2 Cor. 4:4; or "age," A.R.V.). He is mighty, but not almighty. But without divine power man cannot successfully overcome him. He is to be resisted by surrendering to God (Rom. 6:17-21; James 4:7), by putting our confidence in the strength of God's might, and by putting on the whole armor of God (Eph. 6:10-17).

The unsaved are in the "power of Satan" (Acts 26:18), and the wicked world lies in his evil embrace (1 John 5:19, R.S.V.). He has many subtle "devices" (2 Cor. 2:11), even transforming himself into an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14). He blinds the eyes of men so the light of the gospel of God is not perceived (2 Cor. 4:4, A.R.V.). And he snatches the Word of God out of hearts where it has been sown (Luke 8:12).

Satan lays snares for men (1 Tim. 3:7; 2 Tim. 2:26), putting wicked purposes into their hearts (John 13:2;

Acts 5:3), and even entering into men (Luke 22:3). He sows tares in God's field (Matt. 13:25, 39), and works with signs and lying wonders in order to insinuate false views (2 Thess. 2:9, 10). Satan has "ministers" to do his bidding (2 Cor. 11:14, 15), and churches to carry on his work (Rev. 3:9). And he accuses and slanders the "brethren" before God day and night (Job 1:6-12; 2:1-6; Rev. 12:9, 10).

But Satan has been under a perpetual curse ever since he seduced man in Eden (Gen. 3:15). His destiny is fixed. Everlasting fire has been prepared for him and his angels (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10). Christ came to earth and took our nature in order to destroy the devil and his works (Heb. 2:14; 1 John 3:8). Satan sought to overwhelm Christ when He came to reclaim man (Mark 1:12, 13), and has since persecuted the church (Rev. 12:12, 17). But his power and dominion received a death blow at Calvary, and he is a conquered foe (John 12:31; 16:11; 1 John 3:8). He will soon be bruised under the feet of the saints (Rom. 16:20).

Just before the end of the age his sinister "spirits of demons" influence the nations, gathering them together for the great day of God Almighty (Rev. 16:14, A.R.V.). At the second advent he will be bound for a thousand years (Rev. 20:1-3). Loosed for a brief season at its close, he will then be cast into the lake of fire, where his destruction is final (verse 10). He, with his evil angels, will be brought to "ashes," and will not "be any more" (Eze. 28:18, 19; Matt. 25:41). That, we understand, is the biography of Satan as portrayed in the Book of God.

# The Question of Unclean Foods

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## QUESTION 47

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*Do Seventh-day Adventists believe that foods such as lobsters, crabs, pork, et cetera, all forbidden under the Mosaic law, are still forbidden, binding upon the Christian, and hence not to be eaten under penalty of sin?*

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This query opens up an important question—that of the relationship of the Christian to the law of Moses. It is an old question, and as is well known, it has been debated from time to time through the ages.

Answering first the second part of the query, we regard the Decalogue as being distinct from the law of Moses, though we hold that both are revelations from God. But one was the expression of eternal principles, while the other was, in the main, made up of laws pertaining to the ceremonial, or sacrificial, system, which pointed forward to the great antitype, Jesus our Lord. We believe that the law of commandments contained in ordinances—the ceremonial and sacrificial precepts—met its complete fulfillment in Christ on Calvary, as is explicitly emphasized in Ephesians 2:14, 15 and Colossians 2:14-17. (See also Questions 12, 13.)

The law of Moses also contained counsel on human relationships, on civil judgments, on health ques-

tions, and on many other vital principles of faith and practice. That many of these important counsels were carried over and made an integral part of the Christian faith can be seen in the following:

1. That we should love God with all the heart, and our neighbors as ourselves (Deut. 6:5; 10:12; 30:6; compare Matt. 19:19; 22:39; Rom. 13:9; Gal. 5:14).
2. That we should "be holy," for "I am holy" saith the Lord (Lev. 11:44; 19:2; 20:7, et cetera; compare 1 Peter 1:15, 16).
3. That we are to know sanctification of life (Ex. 31:13; Lev. 20:8; Eze. 20:12; compare numerous texts in the New Testament).

These truths formed a vital part of the law of Moses and certainly were not abolished at the cross of Calvary. Rather, they were re-emphasized in the teachings of Jesus Christ, and thus become the norm of our life today *in and through Him*.

The same principle applies to the dietary laws given to Israel of old. It is true we refrain from eating certain articles, as indicated in the query, but *not because* the law of Moses has any binding claims upon us. Far from it. We stand fast in the liberty with which God has set us free. It must be remembered that God recognized "clean" and "unclean" animals at the time of the Flood, long before there was a law of Moses. We reason that if God saw fit at that time to counsel His people against certain articles of diet, these things were not best for human consumption; and since we are physically constituted in the same way as are the Jews and all other peoples, we believe such things are not the best for us to use today.

To us, the whole matter of unclean foods is primarily a question of health, for we believe that "God is as truly the author of physical laws as He is the author of the moral law."—ELLEN G. WHITE, *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 347.

Our health teaching is not a matter of religious taboos; in fact, it is much more than careful selection in diet. It is, to us, the following of a well-balanced health program. We feel it to be our Christian duty to preserve our bodies in the best of health for the service and glory of God. We believe that our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16), and that whether therefore we eat, or drink, or whatsoever we do, we should "do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31).

# Adventist Relationship to World Missions Program

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## QUESTION 48

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*What is your attitude as Christians toward the general missionary program for the evangelization of the non-Christian world? Do you accept responsibility for assigned areas, leaving the rest for other Christian bodies?*

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Our position can best be shown by quoting from the *Working Policy* of the denomination, the section entitled "Statement of Relationship to Other Societies," first adopted by the General Conference Autumn Council, in 1926. This was later revised and enlarged. A copy of this is placed in the hands of every missionary sent out to mission fields. Here is the complete statement from our instruction manual, entitled "Information for Outgoing and Furloughing Missionaries," pages 61-63.

### STATEMENT OF RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER SOCIETIES

In the desire to avoid occasion for misunderstanding or friction in the matter of relationship to the work of other [mission] societies, the following statement of principles is set forth as a guidance to our workers in mission fields in their contacts with other religious organizations:

1. We recognize every agency that lifts up Christ before men as a part of the divine plan for the evangelization of the world, and

we hold in high esteem the Christian men and women in other communions who are engaged in winning souls to Christ.

2. Wherever the prosecution of the Gospel work brings us into touch with other societies and their work, the spirit of Christian courtesy, frankness, and fairness should at all times guide in dealing with mission problems.

3. We recognize that the essence of true religion is that religion is based upon conscience and conviction. It is therefore to be constantly our purpose that no selfish interest or temporal advantage shall draw any person to our communion, and that no tie shall hold any member save the belief and conviction that in this way he finds true connection with Christ. When change of conviction leads any member of our society to feel no longer in accord with us in faith and practice, we recognize not only his right but his duty to change his religious affiliation to accord with his belief.

4. Before admitting to church membership anyone who is a member of another church, every care shall be exercised to ascertain that the candidate is moved to change his religious affiliation only by force of religious conviction and out of regard to his personal relationship to his God; and wherever possible, consultation shall be had with those in charge of the church or mission with which the applicant is connected.

5. Persons under censure of another mission for clearly established fault in Christian morals or character shall not be considered eligible for membership in our mission until they have given evidence of repentance and reformation.

6. An agent [colporteur, teacher, compound helper, etc.] employed or recently employed by another church or mission shall not be employed by our church or mission without preliminary consultation with the church or mission with which the agent is or was formerly connected.

7. The local mission auditing committees are advised to give consideration, when setting salaries, to the salaries paid by other missions operating in the same field.

8. As to the matter of territorial divisions and the restriction of operations to designated areas, our attitude must be shaped by these considerations:

*a.* As in generations past, in the providence of God and the historical development of His work for men, denominational bodies and religious movements have arisen to give special emphasis

to different phases of gospel truth, so we find in the origin and rise of the Seventh-day Adventist people, the burden laid upon us to emphasize the gospel of Christ's second coming as an event "even at the door," calling for the proclamation of the special message of preparation of the way of the Lord as revealed in Holy Scripture.

*b.* As this Advent proclamation is described in Scripture prophecy, particularly as it is set forth in Revelation 14:6-14, it is commissioned that this special message of the "everlasting gospel," which is to precede the coming of the Saviour, shall be preached "to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people." This commission makes it impossible for us to restrict our witness to this phase of the gospel to any limited area, and impels us to call it to the attention of all peoples everywhere.

Where different mission bodies operate in close proximity, there is always a possibility of the development of misunderstandings. This is to be deeply regretted, and as Adventists we wish to assure our fellow workers in the gospel of Christ that as far as we are concerned, in harmony with the foregoing statement published in 1926, we will take every precaution to avert such misunderstandings.

If the matter of proselyting is involved in this question, we would say: According to the Merriam-Webster's New International unabridged dictionary, the verb *proselyte* means "to convert to some religion, opinion, system, or the like; to make a proselyte of; to make proselytes; to convert." All churches are seeking to make converts. In common with other Christian bodies, we believe our God-given duty is set forth in the gospel commission, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations" (Matt. 28:19, R.S.V.). This we are attempting to do.

On the other hand, Seventh-day Adventists do not

believe in obtaining new members by offering financial and other inducements. We condemn such activities wherever they are practiced. The only way men and women can become true members of the body of Christ is through the converting and transforming power of God.

# Representative Adventist Doctrinal Literature

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For the benefit of our readers who may wish to investigate further some of the subjects that have been dealt with but briefly in this book, we list the following publications.

## *General Doctrinal Books*

*Bible Readings for the Home*, by various Bible students. Revised ed. Review and Herald, 1949. 768 pages.

A topical study of the Bible in the popular question-and-answer form, with the answers taken almost entirely from the Bible. The great doctrines of the church and the study of prophecy are thoroughly set forth.

*Drama of the Ages*, by William H. Branson. Southern Publishing Association, 1950. 584 pages.

God's plan for saving man from sin, and how it is working out in the history of the world.

*God Speaks to Modern Man*, by Arthur E. Lickey. Review and Herald, 1952. 635 pages.

An evangelistic presentation of gospel truth, with special emphasis on God's message for these closing days of earth's history.

*Our Firm Foundation*, A Report of the Seventh-day Adventist Bible Conference, Sept. 1-13, 1952. Review and Herald. 2 vols. 1,403 pages.

The papers presented at the Bible Conference covered many features of basic Seventh-day Adventist belief.

*The Bible Made Plain*, Review and Herald, 1922. 96 pages.

A series of short Bible studies on certain fundamentals of Bible doctrine.

*The Faith of Jesus*, by M. L. Andreasen. Review and Herald, 1939, 1949. 574 pages.

What Jesus believed and taught is what the church should believe and teach. All Christians may unite on the platform of the faith of Jesus.

*The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary.* 7 vols. Review and Herald, 1953-1957.

A verse-by-verse study of the Scriptures, with general articles in each volume covering Bible chronology, history, archeology, antiquities, principles of interpretation.

*What Jesus Said*, by H. M. S. Richards. Southern Publishing Association, 1957. 576 pages.

Christ-centered doctrines of the Bible and their application to the problems of our time.

#### *Specific Doctrinal Books*

*Behold the Man*, by Taylor G. Bunch. Southern Publishing Association, 1946. 190 pages.

The sufferings of Christ from Gethsemane to Calvary, with a special study of His Hebrew and Roman trials.

*Following the Master*, by M. L. Andreasen. Southern Publishing Association, 1947. 95 pages.

Fundamentals of the Christian life are clearly set forth—confession, restitution, witnessing, sanctification, prayer, and meditation.

*From Sabbath to Sunday*, by Carlyle B. Haynes. Review and Herald, 1928. 96 pages.

A discussion of the historical aspects of the Sabbath question, showing how, when, why, and by whom the change was made from the seventh to the first day of the week.

*God and I Are Partners*, by Denton E. Rebok. Review and Herald, 1951. 128 pages.

The principle of tithing and how it works out in the Christian's experience.

*God's Holy Day*, by M. L. Andreasen. Review and Herald, 1949. 118 pages.

The place that the Sabbath holds in the Christian's life, in history, and in God's last-day plans.

*His Cross and Mine*, by Meade MacGuire. Review and Herald, 1927. 192 pages.

The true meaning of the sacrifice for sin told in a way to lead the Christian into the ultimate victory of the surrendered life.

*How Men Are Saved*, by W. H. Branson. Southern Publishing Association, 1941. 128 pages.

A simple yet forceful presentation of the plan of salvation and its practical application to men today.

*Law or Grace?* by Louis K. Dickson. Southern Publishing Association, 1937. 96 pages.

The proper attitude toward the law for the Christian today.

*Life, Death, and Immortality*, by Carlyle B. Haynes. Southern Publishing Association, 1952. 408 pages.

A thorough discussion of the nature of man and his relationship to immortality.

*Origin of Sunday Observance*, by Walter E. Straw. Review and Herald, 1939. 118 pages.

The influence of Gnosticism and opposition to Judaizing in the establishment of Sunday observance in the Christian church.

*Our Lord's Return*, by Carlyle B. Haynes. Southern Publishing Association, 1948. 95 pages.

The second advent of Christ in promise and prophecy.

*Signs of Christ's Coming*, by William A. Spicer. Review and Herald, 1941. 96 pages.

An exposition of Matthew 24 and the signs which indicate that Christ's coming is near.

*Spiritism and the Bible*, by Carlyle B. Haynes. Southern Publishing Association, 1949. 96 pages.

The Bible teaching in regard to Spiritism and supposed communication with the dead.

*The Book of Hebrews*, by M. L. Andreasen. Review and Herald, 1948. 568 pages.

A verse-by-verse study of the Epistle to the Hebrews, with special emphasis on the heavenly sanctuary and its place in Christian theology.

*The Christian Sabbath*, by Carlyle B. Haynes. Southern Publishing Association, 1949. 95 pages.

Is the Christian Sabbath Saturday or Sunday?

*The Coming King*, by Arthur S. Maxwell. Pacific Press, 1953. 128 pages.

The signs of Christ's second coming convincingly presented.

*The Coming of the Comforter*, by LeRoy E. Froom. Review and Herald, 1949. 320 pages.

Studies on the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the individual Christian.

*The Holy Spirit*, by W. H. Branson. Southern Publishing Association, 1933. 160 pages.

The personality and work of the Holy Spirit, and His place in the life of the Christian.

*The Law and the Sabbath*, by Allan Walker. Southern Publishing Association, 1953. 240 pages.

The relationship between the law and the Sabbath in Christian theology.

*The Lord's Day*, by Calvin Edwin Moseley, Jr., Southern Publishing Association, 1949. 98 pages.

A Biblical presentation of the Sabbath-Sunday question.

*The Lord's Day the Test of the Ages*, by Milton Charles Wilcox. Pacific Press, 1931. 96 pages.

The whole world is to be tested on its relationship to the Sabbath command.

*The Other Side of Death*, by Carlyle B. Haynes. Southern Publishing Association, 1944. 95 pages.

The whole question of human immortality considered from the standpoint of the teachings of Scripture.

*The Printing Press and the Gospel*, by Edwin R. Palmer. Review and Herald, 1947. 2d ed., revised. 223 pages.

A modern demonstration of the place of the printed word in God's plan for the dissemination of gospel truth.

*The Sabbath: Which Day and Why?* by M. L. Andreasen. Review and Herald, 1942. 312 pages.

A thorough discussion of the Sabbath, its moral obligation, and its place in the final events of earth.

*The True Sabbath*, by Roy F. Cottrell. Southern Publishing Association, 1942. 96 pages.

The Sabbath from creation to the last crisis of the world.

*The Way to Christ*, by W. H. Branson. Review and Herald, 1948. 126 pages.

Salvation through the merits of Jesus Christ is clearly set forth in this little volume.

*When a Man Dies*, by Carlyle B. Haynes. Review and Herald, 1948. 128 pages.

An explanation of the Bible teaching regarding human immortality, the nature of man, the state of the dead, and the future life.

#### *Prophetic Exposition*

*Daniel and the Revelation*, by Uriah Smith. Revised ed., Review and Herald, Pacific Press, and Southern Publishing Association, 1944. 830 pages.

A verse-by-verse study of the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation.

*The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers*, by LeRoy Edwin Froom. Review and Herald, 1946-1954. 4 vols. 3,966 pages.

A study in the historical development of prophetic interpretation from pre-Christian expositors and the apostolic period to the third quarter of the nineteenth century.

*Unfolding the Revelation*, by Roy Allan Anderson. Pacific Press, 1953. 216 pages.

Evangelistic studies in the book of Revelation.

#### *Books by Ellen G. White*

*Patriarchs and Prophets*, by Ellen G. White. Pacific Press, 1890 (original date). 793 pages.

This is the first volume in the Conflict of the Ages Series. It covers the story of God's dealings with men from creation to the last years of David's reign.

*Prophets and Kings*, by Ellen G. White. Pacific Press, 1917. 753 pages.

Volume 2 of the Conflict of the Ages Series. Continues the Old Testament account from Solomon to Malachi.

*The Desire of Ages*, by Ellen G. White. Pacific Press, 1898. 863 pages.

The life of Christ in this book constitutes the third volume of the Conflict Series. The purpose of the book is to set forth Jesus Christ as the One in whom every longing may be satisfied.

*The Acts of the Apostles*, by Ellen G. White. Pacific Press, 1911. 630 pages.

Volume 4 in the Conflict Series carries the New Testament story from the ascension of Christ to the end of the apostolic age.

*The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan*, by Ellen G. White. Pacific Press, 1888. 718 pages.

In this last volume of the Conflict Series, the conflict of the ages is traced through the Christian dispensation to the present, with a look into the future as revealed in the prophecies of the Bible.

*Christ's Object Lessons*, by Ellen G. White. Review and Herald, 1900. 436 pages.

The lessons which Jesus taught in His parables are applied to Christianity today.

*Counsels on Stewardship*, by Ellen G. White. Review and Herald, 1940. 372 pages.

Man's responsibility to render to God a due return for the material benefits which he receives from Heaven.

*Education*, by Ellen G. White. Pacific Press, 1903. 320 pages.

The principles of true education for the Christian.

*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, by Ellen G. White. Southern Publishing Association, 1923. 576 pages.

Selections from the author's published writings in periodicals and special pamphlets on the subject of education for the Christian.

*Gospel Workers*, by Ellen G. White. Review and Herald, 1915. 534 pages.

Instruction for all who are "laborers together with God."

*Steps to Christ*, by Ellen G. White. Review and Herald, 1892 (original date). 128 pages.

A simple account of the steps necessary for the sinner to take as he comes to Christ and accepts Him as a personal Saviour.

*The Ministry of Healing*, by Ellen G. White. Pacific Press, 1905.  
540 pages.

General principles of healthful living and welfare work for the sick.

*The Sanctified Life*, by Ellen G. White. Review and Herald, 1937.  
110 pages.

A discussion of the Bible doctrine of sanctification.

*The Sufferings of Christ*, by Ellen G. White. Review and Herald,  
no date. 47 pages.

The condescension of Christ in consenting to suffer and die for lost mankind is set forth with understanding, sympathy, and skill.

*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, by Ellen G. White. Pacific  
Press, 1900. 172 pages, latest standard edition.

The Sermon on the Mount is here set forth in its spiritual application to the individual Christian.

#### *Apologetic Literature*

*Answers to Objections*, by Francis D. Nichol. Review and Herald,  
1952. 895 pages.

The common objections raised to the teachings of Seventh-day Adventists and how they may be answered from the Scriptures.

*Ellen G. White and Her Critics*, by Francis D. Nichol. Review and  
Herald, 1951. 703 pages.

A candid discussion of the life and ministry of Ellen G. White, her call to the prophetic office, and the objections that have been brought against her work by those who questioned her calling.

*In Defense of the Faith*, by William H. Branson. Review and  
Herald, 1933. 398 pages.

The truth about Seventh-day Adventists in a reply to Canright.

*The Midnight Cry*, by Francis D. Nichol. Review and Herald,  
1944. 576 pages.

A defense of the character and conduct of William Miller and the Millerites, who mistakenly believed that the second coming of Christ would take place in the year 1844.

*Denominational History and Polity*

*Captains of the Host*, by Arthur W. Spalding. Review and Herald, 1949. 704 pages.

*Christ's Last Legion*, by Arthur W. Spalding. Review and Herald, 1949. 784 pages.

A two-volume history of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. *Captains of the Host* brings the history up to 1900.

*Church Manual*. General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1951.

Officially adopted handbook of instruction for Seventh-day Adventist church leaders, covering organization, membership, discipline, finance, duties of officers, and fundamental beliefs.

*Evolution and Creationism*

*Common Sense Geology*, by George McCready Price. Pacific Press, 1946. 239 pages.

Geology from the viewpoint of a creationist.

*Evolution, Creation, and Science*, by Frank Lewis Marsh. Review and Herald, 1944, 1947. 381 pages.

The author discusses creationism from the viewpoint of a biologist, with special emphasis on "species" and the Genesis "kind."

*Genesis Vindicated*, by George McCready Price. Review and Herald, 1941. 313 pages.

A discussion of evolution and creationism.

*Studies in Creationism*, by Frank Lewis Marsh. Review and Herald, 1950. 421 pages.

An able defense of creationism in the light of scientific facts, in which the author shows that some views held by creationists are both un-Biblical and unscientific, and entirely unnecessary to the support of the Bible doctrine of creation.

*Problems and Research*

*Problems in Bible Translation*, by a committee. Review and Herald, 1954. 316 pages.

A study of certain principles of Bible translation and interpretation, together with an examination of several Bible texts in the

light of these principles, in the atmosphere of interest aroused by the most recent translations of the Bible.

*Sunday in Roman Paganism*, by Robert Leo Odom. Review and Herald, 1944. 272 pages.

The story of the introduction of the religious observance of Sunday into the pagan Roman world, as revealed in classical literature and the Greek and Latin inscriptions.

*The Chronology of Ezra 7*, by Siegfried H. Horn and Lynn H. Wood. Review and Herald, 1953. 160 pages.

A special study of the date of the decree of Artaxerxes Longimanus in the seventh year of his reign.

#### ***Religious Liberty***

*American State Papers and Related Documents on Freedom in Religion*. First edition compiled by William Addison Blakely. Fourth edition, revised. Review and Herald, 1949. 915 pages.

Laws and court decisions dealing with religion and religious liberty, with extended notes. Useful to every lover of freedom.



## **XI. Appendixes and Indexes**



# Christ's Place in the Godhead

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## APPENDIX A

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Because the writings of Ellen G. White have often been garbled when allegedly "quoted" by critics or detractors, we here give a comprehensive assemblage of her teachings on the deity and eternal pre-existence of Christ, and His place in the Godhead, or Trinity; His nature during the incarnation; and His atoning sacrifice and priestly ministry.

### *I. Deity and Nature of Christ*

Christ, the Word, the only begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father,—one in nature, in character, in purpose,—the only being that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God. "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of peace" (Isa. 9:6). His "goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (Micah 5:2).—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 34.

The Jews had never before heard such words from human lips, and a convicting influence attended them; for it seemed that divinity flashed through humanity as Jesus said, "I and my Father are one." The words of Christ were full of deep meaning as he put forth the claim that he and the Father were of one substance, possessing the same attributes.—*The Signs of the Times*, Nov. 27, 1893, p. 54.

Yet the Son of God was the acknowledged Sovereign of heaven, one in power and authority with the Father.—*The Great Controversy*, p. 495.

To save the transgressor of God's law, Christ, the one equal with the Father, came to live heaven before men, that they might learn to know what it is to have heaven in the heart. He illustrated what man must be to be worthy of the precious boon of the life that measures with the life of God.—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 179.

The only way in which the fallen race could be restored was through the gift of his Son, equal with himself, possessing the attributes of God. Though so highly exalted, Christ consented to assume human nature, that he might work in behalf of man and reconcile to God his disloyal subject. When man rebelled, Christ

pleaded his merits in his behalf, and became man's substitute and surety. He undertook to combat the powers of darkness in man's behalf, and he prevailed, conquering the enemy of our souls, and presenting to man the cup of salvation.—*The Review and Herald*, Nov. 8, 1892, p. 690.

The world was made by him, “and without him was not anything made that was made.” If Christ made all things, he existed before all things. The words spoken in regard to this are so decisive that no one need be left in doubt. Christ was God essentially, and in the highest sense. He was with God from all eternity, God over all, blessed forevermore. . . .

There are light and glory in the truth that Christ was one with the Father before the foundation of the world was laid. This is the light shining in a dark place, making it resplendent with divine, original glory. This truth, infinitely mysterious in itself, explains other mysterious and otherwise unexplainable truths, while it is enshrined in light, unapproachable and incomprehensible.—*The Review and Herald*, April 5, 1906, p. 8.

The King of the universe summoned the heavenly hosts before Him, that in their presence He might set forth the true position of His Son, and show the relation He sustained to all created beings. The Son of God shared the Father's throne, and the glory of the eternal, self-existent One encircled both.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 36.

However much a shepherd may love his sheep, he loves his sons and daughters more. Jesus is not only our shepherd; He is our “everlasting Father.” And He says, “I know Mine own, and Mine own know Me, even as the Father knoweth Me, and I know the Father.” John 10:14, 15, R.V. What a statement is this!—the only-begotten Son, He who is in the bosom of the Father, He whom God has declared to be “the Man that is My fellow” (Zech. 13:7),—the communion between Him and the eternal God is taken to represent the communion between Christ and His children on the earth!—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 483.

Still seeking to give a true direction to her faith, Jesus declared, “I am the resurrection, and the life.” In Christ is life, original, unborrowed, underived. “He that hath the Son hath life.” 1 John 5:12. The divinity of Christ is the believer's assurance of eternal life.—*Ibid.*, p. 530.

Silence fell upon the vast assembly. The name of God, given to Moses to express the idea of the eternal presence, had been

claimed as His own by this Galilean Rabbi. He had announced Himself to be the self-existent One, He who had been promised to Israel, "whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity."—*Ibid.*, p. 469.

The world's Redeemer was equal with God. His authority was as the authority of God. He declared that he had no existence separate from the Father. The authority by which he spoke, and wrought miracles, was expressly his own, yet he assures us that he and the Father are one.—*The Review and Herald*, Jan. 7, 1890, p. 1.

Jehovah, the eternal, self-existent, uncreated One, Himself the source and sustainer of all, is alone entitled to supreme reverence and worship.—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 305.

Jehovah is the name given to Christ. "Behold, God is my salvation," writes the prophet Isaiah; "I will trust, and not be afraid; for the Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation. Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. And in that day ye shall say, Praise the Lord, call upon His name, declare His doings among the people, make mention that His name is exalted." "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee. Trust ye in the Lord forever; for in the Lord JEHOVAH is everlasting strength."—*The Signs of the Times*, May 3, 1899, p. 2.

The heavenly gates are again to be lifted up, and with ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of holy ones, our Saviour will come forth as King of kings and Lord of lords. Jehovah Immanuel "shall be King over all the earth; in that day shall there be one Lord, and His name one."—*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, p. 160.

This is the reward of all who follow Christ. Jehovah Emmanuel—He "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," in whom dwells "all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. 2:3, 9)—to be brought into sympathy with Him, to know Him, to possess Him, as the heart opens more and more to receive His attributes; to know His love and power, to possess the unsearchable riches of Christ, to comprehend more and more "what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know

the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God" (Eph. 3:18, 19)—"This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of Me, saith the Lord."—*Ibid.*, p. 57.

Before the entrance of sin among the angels: Christ the Word, the only-begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father, —one in nature, in character, and in purpose,—the only being in all the universe that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God. By Christ, the Father wrought in the creation of all heavenly beings.—*The Great Controversy*, p. 493.

If men reject the testimony of the inspired Scriptures concerning the deity of Christ, it is in vain to argue the point with them; for no argument, however conclusive, could convince them. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Corinthians 2:14. None who hold this error can have a true conception of the character or the mission of Christ, or of the great plan of God for man's redemption.—*Ibid.*, p. 524.

## II. *Eternal Pre-existence of Christ*

The Lord Jesus Christ, the divine Son of God, existed from eternity, a distinct person, yet one with the Father. He was the surpassing glory of heaven. He was the commander of the heavenly intelligences, and the adoring homage of the angels was received by him as his right. This was no robbery of God.—*The Review and Herald*, April 5, 1906, p. 8.

In speaking of His pre-existence, Christ carries the mind back through dateless ages. He assures us that there never was a time when He was not in close fellowship with the eternal God. He to whose voice the Jews were then listening had been with God as one brought up with Him.—*The Signs of the Times*, Aug. 29, 1900.

Here Christ shows them that, although they might reckon His life to be less than fifty years, yet His divine life could not be reckoned by human computation. The existence of Christ before His incarnation is not measured by figures.—*The Signs of the Times*, May 3, 1899.

From all eternity Christ was united with the Father, and when He took upon Himself human nature, He was still one with God.—*The Signs of the Times*, Aug. 2, 1905, p. 10.

When Christ passed within the heavenly gates, He was enthroned amidst the adoration of the angels. As soon as this ceremony was completed, the Holy Spirit descended upon the disciples in rich currents, and Christ was indeed glorified, even with the glory which He had with the Father from all eternity.—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 38, 39.

But while God's Word speaks of the humanity of Christ when upon this earth, it also speaks decidedly regarding his pre-existence. The Word existed as a divine being, even as the eternal Son of God, in union and oneness with his Father. From everlasting he was the Mediator of the covenant, the one in whom all nations of the earth, both Jews and Gentiles, if they accepted him, were to be blessed. "The Word was with God, and the Word was God." Before men or angels were created, the Word was with God, and was God.—*The Review and Herald*, April 5, 1906.

A human being lives, but his is a given life, a life that will be quenched. "What is your life? It is even vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." But Christ's life is not a vapor; it is never-ending, a life existing before the worlds were made.—*The Signs of the Times*, June 17, 1897, p. 5.

From the days of eternity the Lord Jesus Christ was one with the Father; He was "the image of God," the image of His greatness and majesty, "the outshining of His glory."—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 19.

He was one with the Father before the angels were created.—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, p. 17.

Christ was God essentially, and in the highest sense. He was with God from all eternity, God over all, blessed forevermore.—*The Review and Herald*, April 5, 1906, p. 8.

The name of God, given to Moses to express the idea of the eternal presence, had been claimed as His own by this Galilean Rabbi. He had announced Himself to be the self-existent One, He who had been promised to Israel, "whose goings forth have been from of old, from the days of eternity." Micah 5:2, margin.—*The Desire of Ages*, pp. 469, 470.

In it [God's Word] we may learn what our redemption has cost Him who from the beginning was equal with the Father.—*Counsels to Parents and Teachers*, p. 13.

### III. *Three Persons in the Godhead*

There are three living persons of the heavenly trio; in the name of these three great powers—the Father, the Son, and the

Holy Spirit—those who receive Christ by living faith are baptized, and these powers will co-operate with the obedient subjects of heaven in their efforts to live the new life in Christ.—*Evangelism*, p. 615.

The Godhead was stirred with pity for the race, and the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit gave themselves to the working out of the plan of redemption.—*Counsels on Health*, p. 222.

Those who proclaim the third angel's message must put on the whole armor of God, that they may stand boldly at their post, in the face of detraction and falsehood, fighting the good fight of faith, resisting the enemy with the word, "It is written." Keep yourselves where the three great powers of heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, can be your efficiency. These powers work with the one who gives himself unreservedly to God. The strength of heaven is at the command of God's believing ones. The man who takes God as his trust is barricaded by an impregnable wall.—*The Southern Watchman*, Feb. 23, 1904, p. 122.

Our sanctification is the work of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is the fulfilment of the covenant that God has made with those who bind themselves up with Him, to stand with Him, with His Son, and with His Spirit in holy fellowship. Have you been born again? Have you become a new being in Christ Jesus? Then co-operate with the three great powers of heaven who are working in your behalf. Doing this you will reveal to the world the principles of righteousness.—*The Signs of the Times*, June 19, 1901.

The eternal heavenly dignitaries—God, and Christ, and the Holy Spirit—arming them [the disciples] with more than mortal energy, . . . would advance with them to the work and convince the world of sin.—*Evangelism*, p. 616.

We are to co-operate with the three highest powers in heaven, —the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost,—and these powers will work through us, making us workers together with God.—*Ibid.*, p. 617.

Those who are baptized in the threefold name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, at the very entrance of their Christian life declare publicly that they have forsaken the service of Satan and have become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King.—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 91.

# Christ's Nature During the Incarnation

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## APPENDIX B

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### *I. The Mystery of the Incarnation*

The humanity of the Son of God is everything to us. It is the golden chain that binds our souls to Christ, and through Christ to God. This is to be our study. *Christ was a real man; He gave proof of His humility in becoming a man. Yet He was God in the flesh.* When we approach this subject, we would do well to heed the words spoken by Christ to Moses at the burning bush, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place where on thou standest is holy ground." We should come to this study with the humility of a learner, with a contrite heart. And the study of the incarnation of Christ is a fruitful field, which will repay the searcher who digs deep for hidden truth.—*The Youth's Instructor*, Oct. 13, 1898.

*The only plan that could be devised to save the human race was that which called for the incarnation, humiliation, and crucifixion of the Son of God, the Majesty of heaven. After the plan of salvation was devised, Satan could have no ground upon which to found his suggestion that God, because so great, could care nothing for so insignificant a creature as man.*—*The Signs of the Times*, Jan. 20, 1890.

*In contemplating the incarnation of Christ in humanity, we stand baffled before an unfathomable mystery, that the human mind cannot comprehend. The more we reflect upon it, the more amazing does it appear. How wide is the contrast between the divinity of Christ and the helpless infant in Bethlehem's manger! How can we span the distance between the mighty God and a helpless child? And yet the Creator of worlds, He in whom was the fullness of the Godhead bodily, was manifest in the helpless babe in the manger. Far higher than any of the angels, equal with the Father in dignity and glory, and yet wearing the garb of humanity! Divinity and humanity were mysteriously combined, and man and God became one.* It is in this union that we find the

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NOTE.—The italicizing of key expressions throughout this compilation is to enable the eye to catch at a glance the pertinent point of each paragraph.—EDITORS.

hope of our fallen race. Looking upon Christ in humanity, we look upon God, and see in Him the brightness of His glory, the express image of His person.—*The Signs of the Times*, July 30, 1896.

As the worker studies the life of Christ, and the character of His mission is dwelt upon, each fresh search will reveal something more deeply interesting than has yet been unfolded. The subject is inexhaustible. The study of the incarnation of Christ, His atoning sacrifice and mediatorial work, *will employ the mind of the diligent student as long as time shall last.*—*Gospel Workers*, p. 251.

That God should thus be manifest in the flesh is indeed a mystery; *and without the help of the Holy Spirit we cannot hope to comprehend this subject.* The most humbling lesson that man has to learn is the nothingness of human wisdom, and the folly of trying, by his own unaided efforts, to find out God.—*The Review and Herald*, April 5, 1906.

Was the human nature of the Son of Mary changed into the divine nature of the Son of God? No; the two natures were mysteriously blended in one person—the man Christ Jesus. In Him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. . . .

*This is a great mystery, a mystery that will not be fully, completely understood in all its greatness until the translation of the redeemed shall take place. Then the power and greatness and efficacy of the gift of God to man will be understood. But the enemy is determined that this gift shall be so mystified that it will become as nothingness.*—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1113.

We cannot explain the great mystery of the plan of redemption. Jesus took upon Himself humanity, that He might reach humanity; *but we cannot explain how divinity was clothed with humanity.* An angel would not have known how to sympathize with fallen man, but Christ came to the world and suffered all our temptations, and carried all our griefs.—*The Review and Herald*, Oct. 1, 1889.

## II. *Miraculous Union of Human and Divine*

Laying aside His royal robe and kingly crown, Christ clothed His divinity with humanity, that human beings might be raised from their degradation and placed on vantage-ground. Christ could not have come to this earth with the glory that He had in

the heavenly courts. Sinful human beings could not have borne the sight. He veiled His divinity with the garb of humanity, but *He did not part with His divinity*. A divine-human Saviour, *He came to stand at the head of the fallen race*, to share in their experience from childhood to manhood. That human beings might be partakers of the divine nature, He came to this earth, and lived a life of perfect obedience.—*Ibid.*, June 15, 1905.

In Christ, *divinity and humanity were combined*. *Divinity was not degraded to humanity; divinity held its place*, but humanity by being united to divinity, withstood the fiercest test of temptation in the wilderness. The prince of this world came to Christ after His long fast, when He was an hungered, and suggested to Him to command the stones to become bread. But the plan of God, devised for the salvation of man, provided that Christ should know hunger, and poverty, and every phase of man's experience.—*Ibid.*, Feb. 18, 1890.

The more we think about Christ's becoming a babe here on earth, the more wonderful it appears. How can it be that *the helpless babe in Bethlehem's manger is still the divine Son of God*? Though we cannot understand it, we can believe that He who made the worlds, for our sakes became a helpless babe. Though higher than any of the angels, *though as great as the Father on the throne of heaven He became one with us*. *In Him God and man became one*, and it is in this fact that we find the hope of our fallen race. Looking upon Christ in the flesh, we look upon God in humanity, and see in Him the brightness of divine glory, the express image of God the Father.—*The Youth's Instructor*, Nov. 21, 1895.

*No one, looking upon the childlike countenance, shining with animation, could say that Christ was just like other children. He was God in human flesh.* When urged by His companions to do wrong, divinity flashed through humanity, and He refused decidedly. In a moment He distinguished between right and wrong, and placed sin in the light of God's commands, holding up the law as a mirror which reflected light upon wrong.—*Ibid.*, Sept. 8, 1898.

As a member of the human family He was mortal, but as a God He was the fountain of life to the world. *He could, in His divine person, ever have withstood the advances of death*, and refused to come under its dominion; but He voluntarily laid down His life, that in so doing He might give life and bring im-

mortality to light. . . . What humility was this! It amazed angels. The tongue can never describe it; the imagination cannot take it in. The eternal Word consented to be made flesh! *God became man!*—*The Review and Herald*, July 5, 1887.

The apostle would call our attention from ourselves to the Author of our salvation. He presents before us His two natures, divine and human. . . . *He voluntarily assumed human nature.* It was His own act, and by His own consent. *He clothed His divinity with humanity.* He was all the while as God, but He did not appear as God. He veiled the demonstrations of Deity which had commanded the homage, and called forth the admiration of the universe of God. *He was God while upon earth, but He divested Himself of the form of God,* and in its stead took the form and fashion of a man. He walked the earth as a man. For our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be made rich. He laid aside His glory and His majesty. He was God, but the glories of the form of God He for awhile relinquished. . . . *He bore the sins of the world, and endured the penalty which rolled like a mountain upon His divine soul.* He yielded up His life a sacrifice, that man should not eternally die. He died, not through being compelled to die, but by His own free will.—*Ibid.*

Was the human nature of the Son of Mary changed into the divine nature of the Son of God? No; the two natures were mysteriously blended in one person—the man Christ Jesus. In Him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. *When Christ was crucified, it was His human nature that died. Deity did not sink and die;* that would have been impossible.—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1113.

### III. Took Sinless Human Nature

Christ came to the earth, taking humanity and *standing as man's representative*, to show in the controversy with Satan that man, as God created him, connected with the Father and the Son, could obey every divine requirement.—*The Signs of the Times*, June 9, 1898.

Christ is called the second Adam. In purity and holiness, connected with God and beloved by God, *He began where the first Adam began.* Willingly *He passed over the ground where Adam fell,* and redeemed Adam's failure.—*The Youth's Instructor*, June 2, 1898.

In the fullness of time He was to be revealed in human form. He was to *take His position at the head of humanity by taking the nature but not the sinfulness of man.* In heaven was heard the voice, "The Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord."—*The Signs of the Times*, May 29, 1901.

When Christ bowed His head and died, He bore the pillars of Satan's kingdom with Him to the earth. He *vanquished Satan in the same nature over which in Eden Satan obtained the victory.* The enemy was overcome by Christ in His human nature. The power of the Saviour's Godhead was hidden. He overcame in human nature, relying upon God for power.—*The Youth's Instructor*, April 25, 1901.

In taking upon Himself man's nature in its fallen condition, *Christ did not in the least participate in its sin. He was subject to the infirmities and weaknesses by which man is encompassed,* "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses." He was touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and was in all points tempted like as we are. And yet He "*knew no sin.*" He was the Lamb "*without blemish and without spot.*" Could Satan in the least particular have tempted Christ to sin, he would have bruised the Saviour's head. As it was, he could only touch His heel. Had the head of Christ been touched, the hope of the human race would have perished. Divine wrath would have come upon Christ as it came upon Adam. . . . *We should have no misgivings in regard to the perfect sinlessness of the human nature of Christ.*—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1131.

Be careful, exceedingly careful as to how you dwell upon the human nature of Christ. *Do not set Him before the people as a man with the propensities of sin.* He is the second Adam. *The first Adam was created a pure, sinless being, without a taint of sin upon him;* he was in the image of God. He could fall, and he did fall through transgressing. Because of sin his posterity was born with inherent propensities of disobedience. But Jesus Christ was the only begotten Son of God. *He took upon Himself human nature,* and was tempted in all points as human nature is tempted. He could have sinned; He could have fallen, *but not for one moment was there in Him an evil propensity.* He was assailed with temptations in the wilderness, as Adam was assailed with temptations in Eden.—*Ibid.*, p. 1128.

The Son of God humbled Himself and took man's nature after the race had wandered four thousand years from Eden, and from their original state of purity and uprightness. Sin had been making its terrible marks upon the race for ages; and physical, mental, and moral degeneracy prevailed throughout the human family. *When Adam was assailed by the tempter in Eden he was without the taint of sin. . . . Christ, in the wilderness of temptation, stood in Adam's place to bear the test he failed to endure.*—*The Review and Herald*, July 28, 1874.

Avoid every question in relation to the humanity of Christ which is liable to be misunderstood. Truth lies close to the track of presumption. *In treating upon the humanity of Christ, you need to guard strenuously every assertion, lest your words be taken to mean more than they imply, and thus you lose or dim the clear perceptions of His humanity as combined with divinity. His birth was a miracle of God. . . . Never, in any way, leave the slightest impression upon human minds that a taint of, or inclination to, corruption rested upon Christ, or that He in any way yielded to corruption.* He was tempted in all points like as man is tempted, yet He is called "that holy thing." It is a mystery that is left unexplained to mortals that Christ could be tempted in all points like as we are, and yet be without sin. The incarnation of Christ has ever been, and will ever remain, a mystery. That which is revealed, is for us and for our children, *but let every human being be warned from the ground of making Christ altogether human, such an one as ourselves; for it cannot be.*—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, pp. 1128, 1129.

What opposites meet and are revealed in the person of Christ! *The mighty God, yet a helpless child!* The Creator of all the world, yet, in a world of His creating, often hungry and weary, and without a place to lay His head! The Son of man, yet infinitely higher than the angels! Equal with the Father, yet His divinity clothed with humanity, *standing at the head of the fallen race*, that human beings might be placed on vantage-ground! Possessing eternal riches, yet *living the life of a poor man!* One with the Father in dignity and power, yet in His humanity *tempted in all points like as we are tempted!* In the very moment of His dying agony on the cross, a Conqueror, answering the request of the repentant sinner to be remembered by Him when He came into His kingdom.—*The Signs of the Times*, April 26, 1905.

**IV. Assumed Liabilities of Human Nature**

The doctrine of the incarnation of Christ in human flesh is a mystery, "even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations." It is the great and profound mystery of godliness. . . .

*Christ did not make believe take human nature; He did verily take it. He did in reality possess human nature. "As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same." He was the son of Mary; He was of the seed of David according to human descent.—The Review and Herald, April 5, 1906.*

He came to this world in human form, to live a man amongst men. He assumed the liabilities of human nature, to be proved and tried. *In His humanity He was a partaker of the divine nature.* In His incarnation He gained in a new sense the title of the Son of God.—*The Signs of the Times*, Aug. 2, 1905.

But our Saviour took humanity, with all its liabilities. *He took the nature of man, with the possibility of yielding to temptation.* We have nothing to bear which He has not endured.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 117.

Christ bore the sins and infirmities of the race as they existed when He came to the earth to help man. In behalf of the race, with the weaknesses of fallen man upon Him, He was to stand the temptations of Satan upon all points wherewith man would be assailed.—*The Review and Herald*, July 28, 1874.

Jesus was in all things made like unto His brethren. He became flesh, even as we are. He was hungry and thirsty and weary. He was sustained by food and refreshed by sleep. *He shared the lot of man; yet He was the blameless Son of God.* He was God in the flesh. His character is to be ours.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 311.

The human nature of Christ is likened to ours, and suffering was more keenly felt by Him; for *His spiritual nature was free from every taint of sin.* Therefore His desire for the removal of suffering was stronger than human beings can experience. . . .

The Son of God endured the wrath of God against sin. *All the accumulated sin of the world was laid upon the Sin-bearer,* the One who was innocent, the One who alone could be the propitiation for sin, because He Himself was obedient. He was One with God. *Not a taint of corruption was upon Him.—The Signs of the Times*, Dec. 9, 1897.

As one with us, He must bear the burden of our guilt and woe. *The Sinless One must feel the shame of sin. . . . Every sin, every discord, every defiling lust that transgression had brought, was torture to His spirit.*—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 111.

*The weight of the sins of the world was pressing His soul*, and His countenance expressed unutterable sorrow, *a depth of anguish that fallen man had never realized*. He felt the overwhelming tide of woe that deluged the world. He realized the strength of indulged appetite and of unholy passion that controlled the world.—*The Review and Herald*, Aug. 4, 1874.

Entire justice was done in the atonement. In the place of the sinner, *the spotless Son of God received the penalty*, and the sinner goes free as long as he receives and holds Christ as his personal Saviour. Though guilty, he is looked upon as innocent. Christ fulfilled every requirement demanded by justice.—*The Youth's Instructor*, April 25, 1901.

*Guiltless, He bore the punishment of the guilty. Innocent, yet offering Himself as a substitute for the transgressor. The guilt of every sin pressed its weight upon the divine soul of the world's Redeemer.*—*The Signs of the Times*, Dec. 5, 1892.

He took upon His *sinless* nature our *sinful* nature, that He might know how to succor those that are tempted.—*Medical Ministry*, p. 181.

#### V. Tempted on All Points

*Christ alone had experience in all the sorrows and temptations that befall human beings.* Never another of woman born was so fiercely beset by temptation; never another bore so heavy a burden of the world's sin and pain. *Never was there another whose sympathies were so broad or so tender.* A sharer in all the experiences of humanity, He could feel not only for, but with, every burdened and tempted and struggling one.—*Education*, p. 78.

God was in Christ in human form, and endured all the temptations wherewith man was beset; in our behalf *He participated in the suffering and trials of sorrowful human nature.*—*The Watchman*, Dec. 10, 1907.

He "was in all points tempted like as we are." Satan stood ready to assail Him at every step, hurling at Him his fiercest temptations; yet He "did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth." "*He . . . suffered being tempted,*" *suffered in proportion to the perfection of His holiness.* But the prince of darkness

found nothing in Him; *not a single thought or feeling responded to temptation.*—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 422.

Would that we could comprehend the significance of the words, “Christ suffered, being tempted.” While *He was free from the taint of sin*, the refined sensibilities of *His holy nature rendered contact with evil unspeakably painful to Him*. Yet with human nature upon Him, He met the arch-apostate face to face, and single-handed withstood the foe of His throne. *Not even by a thought could Christ be brought to yield to the power of temptation.* Satan finds in human hearts some point where he can gain a foot-hold; some sinful desire is cherished, by means of which his temptations assert their power. But Christ declared of Himself, “*The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me.*” The storms of temptation burst upon Him, but they could not cause Him to swerve from His allegiance to God.—*The Review and Herald*, Nov. 8, 1887.

I perceive that there is danger in approaching subjects which dwell on the humanity of the Son of the infinite God. He did humble Himself when He saw He was in fashion as a man, that He might understand the force of all temptations wherewith man is beset. . . . *On not one occasion was there a response to his manifold temptations.* Not once did Christ step on Satan’s ground, to give him any advantage. Satan found nothing in Him to encourage his advances.—*The SDA Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1129.

Many claim that it was impossible for Christ to be overcome by temptation. Then He could not have been placed in Adam’s position; He could not have gained the victory that Adam failed to gain. If we have in any sense a more trying conflict than had Christ, then He would not be able to succor us. But our Saviour took humanity, with all its liabilities. He took the nature of man, with the possibility of yielding to temptation. We have nothing to bear which He has not endured. . . . In man’s behalf, Christ conquered by enduring the severest test. For our sake He exercised a self-control stronger than hunger or death.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 117.

#### **VI. Bore the Imputed Sin and Guilt of the World**

Christ bore the guilt of the sins of the world. Our sufficiency is found only in the incarnation and death of the Son of God. He could suffer, because sustained by divinity. *He could endure, be-*

*cause He was without one taint of disloyalty or sin.—The Youth's Instructor, Aug. 4, 1898.*

He [Christ] took human nature, and bore the infirmities and degeneracy of the race.—*The Review and Herald*, July 28, 1874.

It would have been an almost infinite humiliation for the Son of God to take man's nature, even when Adam stood in his innocence in Eden. But Jesus accepted humanity when the race had been weakened by four thousand years of sin. Like every child of Adam He accepted the results of the working of the great law of heredity. What these results were is shown in the history of His earthly ancestors. He came with such a heredity to share our sorrows and temptations, and to give us the example of a sinless life.

Satan in heaven had hated Christ for His position in the courts of God. He hated Him the more when he himself was dethroned. He hated Him who pledged Himself to redeem a race of sinners. Yet into the world where Satan claimed dominion God permitted His Son to come, a helpless babe, subject to the weakness of humanity. He permitted Him to meet life's peril in common with every human soul, to fight the battle as every child of humanity must fight it, at the risk of failure and eternal loss.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 49.

Wondrous combination of man and God! He might have helped His human nature to withstand the inroads of disease by pouring from His divine nature vitality and undecaying vigor to the human. But He humbled Himself to man's nature. . . . God became man!—*The Review and Herald*, Sept. 4, 1900.

In our humanity, Christ was to redeem Adam's failure. But when Adam was assailed by the tempter, none of the effects of sin were upon him. He stood in the strength of perfect manhood, possessing the full vigor of mind and body. He was surrounded with the glories of Eden, and was in daily communion with heavenly beings. It was not thus with Jesus when He entered the wilderness to cope with Satan. For four thousand years the race had been decreasing in physical strength, in mental power, and in moral worth; and Christ took upon Him the infirmities of degenerate humanity. Only thus could He rescue man from the lowest depths of his degradation.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 117.

Clad in the vestments of humanity, the Son of God came down to the level of those He wished to save. In Him was no guile or sinfulness; He was ever pure and undefiled; yet He took

*upon Him our sinful nature.* Clothing His divinity with humanity, *that He might associate with fallen humanity*, He sought to regain for man that which, by disobedience, Adam had lost for himself and for the world. *In His own character He displayed to the world the character of God.*—*The Review and Herald*, Dec. 15, 1896.

He for our sakes laid aside His royal robe, stepped down from the throne in heaven, and *descended to clothe His divinity with humility, and became like one of us except in sin*, that His life and character should be a pattern for all to copy, that they might have the precious gift of eternal life.—*The Youth's Instructor*, Oct. 20, 1886.

He was *born without a taint of sin*, but came into the world in like manner as the human family.—Letter 97, 1898.

*Harmless and undefiled*, He walked among the thoughtless, the rude, the uncourteous.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 90.

Christ, who knew not the least taint of sin or defilement, *took our nature in its deteriorated condition. This was humiliation greater than finite man can comprehend.* God was manifest in the flesh. He humbled Himself. What a subject for thought, for deep, earnest contemplation! So infinitely great that He was the Majesty of heaven, and yet He stooped so low, without losing one atom of His dignity and glory! He *stooped to poverty* and to the deepest *abasement* among men.—*The Signs of the Times*, June 9, 1898.

Notwithstanding that the sins of a guilty world were laid upon Christ, notwithstanding *the humiliation of taking upon Himself our fallen nature*, the voice from heaven declared Him to be *the Son of the Eternal*.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 112.

Though He *had no taint of sin upon His character*, yet He condescended to *connect our fallen human nature with His divinity*. By thus taking humanity, He honored humanity. *Having taken our fallen nature, He showed what it might become*, by accepting the ample provision He has made for it, and by becoming partaker of the divine nature.—*Special Instruction Relating to the Review and Herald Office, and the Work in Battle Creek*, May 26, 1896, p. 13.

He [Paul] directs the mind first to the position which Christ occupied in heaven, in the bosom of His Father; he reveals Him afterward as laying off His glory, voluntarily *subjecting Himself to all the humbling conditions of man's nature*, assuming the

*responsibilities of a servant, and becoming obedient unto death, and that death the most ignominious and revolting, the most shameful, the most agonizing—the death of the cross.—Testimonies, vol. 4, p. 458.*

The angels prostrated themselves before Him. They offered their lives. Jesus said to them that He would by His death save many, that the life of an angel could not pay the debt. His life alone could be accepted of His Father as a ransom for man. Jesus also told them that they would have a part to act, to be with Him and at different times strengthen Him; that He would take man's fallen nature, and His *strength* would not be even equal with theirs; that they would be witnesses of His *humiliation and great sufferings*.—*Early Writings*, p. 150.

*Amid impurity, Christ maintained His purity. Satan could not stain or corrupt it. His character revealed a perfect hatred for sin. It was His holiness that stirred against Him all the passion of a profligate world; for by His perfect life He threw upon the world a perpetual reproach, and made manifest the contrast between transgression and the pure spotless righteousness of One that knew no sin.—The SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 5, p. 1142.*

#### VII. Perfect Sinlessness of Christ's Human Nature

*We should have no misgivings in regard to the perfect sinlessness of the human nature of Christ. Our faith must be an intelligent faith, looking unto Jesus in perfect confidence, in full and entire faith in the atoning sacrifice. This is essential that the soul may not be enshrouded in darkness. This *holy substitute* is able to save to the uttermost; for He presented to the wondering universe *perfect and complete humility* in His human character, and *perfect obedience to all the requirements of God*.—The Signs of the Times, June 9, 1898.*

With His human arm, Christ encircled the race, while with His divine arm, He grasped the throne of the Infinite, uniting finite man with the infinite God. He bridged the gulf that sin had made, and connected earth with heaven. *In His human nature He maintained the purity of His divine character.—The Youth's Instructor*, June 2, 1898.

He was *unsullied with corruption, a stranger to sin*; yet He prayed, and that often with strong crying and tears. He prayed for His disciples and for Himself, thus *identifying Himself with our needs, our weaknesses, and our failings*, which are so common

with humanity. He was a mighty petitioner, *not possessing the passions of our human, fallen natures*, but compassed with like infirmities, tempted in all points like as we are. Jesus endured agony which required help and support from His Father.—*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 508.

He is a brother in our infirmities, but not in possessing like passions. As the sinless One, His nature recoiled from evil. He endured struggles and torture of soul in a world of sin. His humanity made prayer a necessity and privilege. He required all the stronger divine support and comfort which His Father was ready to impart to Him, to Him who had, for the benefit of man, left the joys of heaven and chosen His home in a cold and thankless world.—*Ibid.*, p. 202.

His doctrine dropped as the rain; His speech distilled as the dew. In the character of Christ was blended such majesty as God had never before displayed to fallen man, and such meekness as man had never developed. *Never before had there walked among men one so noble, so pure, so benevolent, so conscious of His godlike nature; yet so simple, so full of plans and purposes to do good to humanity.* While abhorring sin, He wept with compassion over the sinner. He pleased not Himself. The Majesty of heaven clothed Himself with the humility of a child. This is the character of Christ.—*Ibid.*, vol. 5, p. 422.

The life of Jesus was a life in harmony with God. While He was a child, He thought and spoke as a child; but *no trace of sin marred the image of God within Him.* Yet He was not exempt from temptation. . . . Jesus was placed where His character would be tested. It was necessary for Him to be *constantly on guard in order to preserve His purity.* He was *subject to all the conflicts which we have to meet*, that He might be an example to us in childhood, youth, and manhood.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 71.

*In taking upon Himself man's nature in its fallen condition, Christ did not in the least participate in its sin.* He was subject to the infirmities and weaknesses by which man is encompassed, “that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.” He was touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and was in all points tempted like as we are. And yet *He “knew no sin.”* He was the Lamb “without blemish and without spot.” . . . We should have *no misgivings in regard to the perfect sinlessness of the human nature of Christ.*—*The Signs of the Times*, June 9, 1898.

Christ alone could open the way, by making an offering equal to the demands of the divine law. *He was perfect, and undefiled by sin. He was without spot or blemish.* The extent of the terrible consequences of sin could never have been known, had not the remedy provided been of infinite value. The salvation of fallen man was procured at such an immense cost that angels marveled, and could not fully comprehend the divine mystery that the Majesty of Heaven, equal with God, should die for the rebellious race.—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2, pp. 11, 12.

Thus it is with the leprosy of sin,—deep-rooted, deadly, and impossible to be cleansed by human power. “The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores.” Isa. 1:5, 6. But *Jesus, coming to dwell in humanity, receives no pollution.* His presence has healing virtue for the sinner.—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 266.

Jesus looked for a moment upon the scene,—the trembling victim in her shame, the hard-faced dignitaries, devoid of even human pity. *His spirit of stainless purity shrank from the spectacle.* Well He knew for what purpose this case had been brought to Him. He read the heart, and knew the character and life history of everyone in His presence. . . . The accusers had been defeated. Now, their robe of pretended holiness torn from them, they stood, guilty and condemned, *in the presence of Infinite Purity.*—*Ibid.*, p. 461.

#### VIII. *Christ Retains Human Nature Forever*

In stooping to take upon Himself humanity, Christ revealed a character the opposite of the character of Satan. . . . *In taking our nature, the Saviour has bound Himself to humanity by a tie that is never to be broken. Through the eternal ages He is linked with us.* “God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son.” John 3:16. He gave Him not only to bear our sins, and to die as our sacrifice; *He gave Him to the fallen race.* To assure us of His immutable counsel of peace, God gave His only-begotten Son to become one of the human family, *forever to retain His human nature.* This is the pledge that God will fulfill His word. “Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder.” God has adopted human nature in the person of His Son, *and has carried the same into the highest heaven.*—*Ibid.*, p. 25.

# The Atonement

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## APPENDIX C

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### PART I—ATONING SACRIFICE

#### *I. Centrality of the Atoning Cross*

*The sacrifice of Christ as atonement for sin is the great truth around which all other truths cluster.—Gospel Workers, p. 315.*

*It [the cross] is the central pillar on which hangs the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory which is for those who accept that cross. Under and around the cross of Christ, that immortal pillar, sin shall never revive, nor error obtain control.—Letter 124, 1900.*

*The Sacrifice of Christ as an atonement for sin is the great truth around which all other truths cluster. In order to be rightly understood and appreciated, every truth in the Word of God, from Genesis to Revelation, must be studied in the light that streams from the cross of Calvary. I present before you the great, grand monument of mercy and regeneration, salvation and redemption,—the Son of God uplifted on the cross. This is to be the foundation of every discourse given by our ministers.—Gospel Workers, p. 315.*

The cross of Calvary challenges, and will finally vanquish every earthly and hellish power. *In the cross all influence centers, and from it all influence goes forth. It is the great center of attraction;* for on it Christ gave up His life for the human race. This sacrifice was offered for the purpose of restoring man to his original perfection; yea, more. It was offered to give him an entire transformation of character, making him more than a conqueror. . . .

If the cross does not find an influence in its favor, it creates an influence. Through generation succeeding generation, the truth for this time is revealed as present truth. *Christ on the cross was the medium whereby mercy and truth met together, and right-*

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NOTE.—The italicizing of key expressions throughout this compilation is to enable the eye to catch at a glance the pertinent point of each paragraph.—EDITORS.

*eousness and peace kissed each other. This is the means that is to move the world.—Manuscript 56, 1899.*

There is one great central truth to be kept ever before the mind in the searching of the Scriptures—*Christ and Him crucified. Every other truth is invested with influence and power corresponding to its relation to this theme.* It is only in the light of the cross that we can discern the exalted character of the law of God. The soul palsied by sin can be endowed with life only through the work wrought out upon the cross by the Author of our salvation.—Manuscript 31, 1890.

*Hanging upon the cross Christ was the gospel. . . . This is our message, our argument, our doctrine, our warning to the impenitent, our encouragement for the sorrowing, the hope for every believer.* If we can awaken an interest in men's minds that will cause them to fix their eyes on Christ, we may step aside, and ask them only to continue to fix their eyes upon the Lamb of God.—Manuscript 49, 1898.

Gather up the strongest affirmative statements regarding the atonement made by Christ for the sins of the world. Show the necessity for this atonement.—*Evangelism*, p. 187.

The fact that the companions of Christ in His crucifixion were placed the one on His right hand and the other on His left is a significant one; *His cross is placed in the very center of the world.*—Manuscript 52, 1897.

*Christ and Him crucified, is the message God would have His servants sound through the length and breadth of the world. The law and the gospel will then be presented as a perfect whole.—The Review and Herald, Sept. 29, 1896.*

*Never should a sermon be preached, or Bible instruction in any line be given, without pointing the hearers to “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” John 1:29. Every true doctrine makes Christ the center, every precept receives force from His words.—Testimonies, vol. 6, p. 54.*

To remove the cross from the Christian would be like blotting out the sun from the sky. *The cross brings us near to God, reconciling us to Him. . . . Without the cross, man could have no union with the Father. On it depends our every hope.—The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 209, 210.

*The study of the incarnation of Christ, His atoning sacrifice, and mediatorial work, will employ the mind of the diligent student as long as time shall last.—Gospel Workers*, p. 251.

*Christ crucified for our sins, Christ risen from the dead, Christ ascended on high, is the science of salvation that we are to learn and to teach.—Testimonies, vol. 8, p. 287.*

*No discourse should ever be presented without presenting Christ and Him crucified as the foundation of the gospel.—Ibid., vol. 4, p. 394.*

*We must become exponents of the efficacy of the blood of Christ, by which our own sins have been forgiven.—Ibid., vol. 6, p. 82.*

Science is too limited to comprehend the atonement; the mysterious and wonderful *plan of redemption is so far-reaching that philosophy can not explain it*; it will ever remain a mystery that the most profound reason can not fathom. If it could be explained by finite wisdom, it would lose its sacredness and dignity. *It is a mystery that One equal with the eternal Father should so abase Himself as to suffer the cruel death of the cross to ransom man*; and it is a mystery that God so loved the world as to permit His Son to make this great sacrifice.—*The Signs of the Times*, Oct. 24, 1906.

*It is Satan's studied purpose to keep souls from believing in Christ as their only hope; for the blood of Christ that cleanseth from all sin is efficacious in behalf of those only who believe in its merit.—Gospel Workers, p. 162.*

## **II. Complete Sacrificial Atonement Made on Cross**

He [Christ] planted the cross between heaven and earth, and *when the Father beheld the sacrifice of His Son, He bowed before it in recognition of its perfection. "It is enough," He said. "The Atonement is complete."*—*The Review and Herald*, Sept. 24, 1901.

Type met antitype in the death of Christ, the Lamb slain for the sins of the world. Our great High Priest has made the only sacrifice that is of any value in our salvation. *When He offered Himself on the cross, a perfect atonement was made for the sins of the people.* We are now standing in the outer court, waiting and looking for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.—*The Signs of the Times*, June 28, 1899.

Our great High Priest completed the sacrificial offering of Himself *when He suffered without the gate. Then a perfect atonement was made for the sins of the people.* Jesus is our Advocate, our High Priest, our Intercessor. Our present position therefore is

like that of the Israelites, standing in the outer court, waiting and looking for that blessed hope, the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.—Manuscript 128, 1897.

The time had come for the universe of heaven to accept their King. Angels, cherubim and seraphim, would now stand in view of the cross. . . . *The Father* accepts the Son. No language could convey the rejoicing of heaven or God's expression of satisfaction and delight in His only begotten Son as He *saw the completion of the atonement*.—*The Signs of the Times*, Aug. 16, 1899.

The Father demonstrates His infinite love for Christ, who paid our ransom with His blood, by receiving and welcoming Christ's friends as His friends. He is satisfied with the *atonement* made. *He is glorified by the incarnation, the life, death, and mediation of His Son*.—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 364.

The Father gave all honor to the Son, seating Him at His right hand, far above all principalities and power. He expressed His great joy and delight in receiving the Crucified One and crowning Him with glory and honor. And all the favors He has shown to His Son in His acceptance of the great atonement are shown to His people. . . . God loves them as He loves His Son. . . . *The seal of heaven has been affixed to Christ's atonement. His sacrifice is in every way satisfactory*.—*The Signs of the Times*, Aug. 16, 1899.

*The sacrifice of Christ is sufficient; He made a whole, efficacious offering to God; the human effort without the merit of Christ, is worthless*.—*The Review and Herald*, Aug. 19, 1890 (March 24, 1896).

As the sacrifice in our behalf was complete, so our restoration from the defilement of sin is to be complete.—*The Ministry of Healing*, p. 451.

*His death on the cross of Calvary was the climax of His humiliation. His work as a redeemer is beyond finite conception. Only those who have died to self, whose lives are hid with Christ in God, can have any conception of the completeness of the offering made to save the fallen race*.—Letter 196, 1901.

### III. *Incarnation Prerequisite to Atoning Sacrifice*

*Christ has purchased the world by making a ransom for it, by taking human nature. He was not only the offering, but He Himself was the Offerer. He clothed His divinity with humanity, and voluntarily took upon Him human nature, making it possible to offer Himself as a ransom*.—Manuscript 92, 1899.

Not one of the angels could have become surety for the human race: their life is God's; they could not surrender it. The angels all wear the yoke of obedience. They are the appointed messengers of Him who is the commander of all heaven. But *Christ is equal with God, infinite and omnipotent. He could pay the ransom for man's freedom. He is the eternal, self-existing Son, on whom no yoke had come; and when God asked, "Whom shall I send?" He could reply, "Here am I; send me."* He could pledge Himself to become man's surety; for He could say that which the highest angel could not say,—I have power over My own life, "power to lay it down, and . . . power to take it again."—*The Youth's Instructor*, June 21, 1900.

*Man could not atone for man.* His sinful, fallen condition would constitute him an imperfect offering, an atoning sacrifice of less value than Adam before his fall. God made man perfect and upright, and after his transgression there could be no sacrifice acceptable to God for him, unless the offering made should in value be superior to man as he was in his state of perfection and innocence.

*The divine Son of God was the only sacrifice of sufficient value to fully satisfy the claims of God's perfect law.* The angels were sinless, but of less value than the law of God. They were amenable to law. They were messengers to do the will of Christ, and before him to bow. They were created beings, and probationers. Upon Christ no requirements were laid. He had power to lay down his life, and to take it again. No obligation was laid upon him to undertake the work of atonement. It was a voluntary sacrifice that he made. *His life was of sufficient value to rescue man from his fallen condition.*—*The Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 2 (1877 ed.), pp. 9, 10.

#### IV. *Spotless Christ Was Perfect Offering*

Christ could not have done this work had He not been personally spotless. *Only One who was Himself perfection could be at once the sin bearer and the sin pardoner.* He stands before the congregation of His redeemed as their sin-burdened, sin-stained surety, *but it is their sins He is bearing.* All through His life of humiliation and suffering, from the time that He was born an infant in Bethlehem till He hung on the cross of Calvary, and cried in a voice that shook the universe, "It is finished," *the Saviour was pure and spotless.*—Manuscript 165, 1899.

*Christ was without sin, else His life in human flesh and His*

death on the cross *would have been of no more value in procuring grace for the sinner than the death of any other man.* While He took upon Him humanity, it was a life taken into union with Deity. He could lay down His life as priest and also victim. He possessed in Himself power to lay it down and take it up again. *He offered Himself without spot to God.*—Manuscript 92, 1899.

When He uttered the cry “It is finished,” Christ knew that the battle was won. As a moral conqueror, He planted His banner on the eternal heights. Was there not joy among the angels? *Not a son, not a daughter of Adam, but could now lay hold on the merits of the spotless Son of God,* and say, Christ has died for me. He is my Saviour.—Manuscript 111, 1897.

As the sinbearer, and priest and representative of man before God, He [Christ] entered into the life of humanity, bearing our flesh and blood. The life is in the living, vital current of blood, which blood was given for the life of the world. *Christ made a full atonement, giving His life as a ransom for us. He was born without a taint of sin,* but came into the world in like manner as the human family. He did not have a mere semblance of a body, but He took human nature, participating in the life of humanity. According to the law Christ Himself gave, the forfeited inheritance was ransomed by the nearest of kin. *Jesus Christ laid off His royal robe, His kingly crown, and clothed His divinity with humanity, in order to become a substitute and surety for humanity,* that dying in humanity He might by His death destroy him who had the power of death. *He could not have done this as God, but by coming as man Christ could die.* By death He overcame death. The death of Christ bore to the death him who had the power of death, and opened the gates of the tomb for all who receive Him as their personal Saviour.—Letter 97, 1898.

#### **V. Guilt and Punishment Transferred to Substitute**

*In dying upon the cross, He transferred the guilt from the person of the transgressor to that of the divine Substitute, through faith in Him as his personal Redeemer. The sins of a guilty world, which in figure are represented as “red as crimson,” were imputed to the divine Surety.*—Manuscript 84a, 1897.

*The holy Son of God has no sins or griefs of His own to bear: He was bearing the griefs of others; for on Him was laid the iniquity of us all.* Through divine sympathy He connects Himself with man, and as the representative of the race He submits to be

*treated as a transgressor.* He looks into the abyss of woe opened for us by our sins, and proposes to bridge the gulf of man's separation from God.—*Bible Echo and Signs of the Times*, Aug. 1, 1892.

He was overwhelmed with horror at the fearful work that sin had wrought. *His burden of guilt, because of man's transgression of the Father's law, was so great that human nature was inadequate to bear it.* The sufferings of martyrs can bear no comparison with the agony of Christ. The divine presence was with them in their sufferings; but *the Father's face was hidden from His dear Son.*—*Ibid.*

In the Garden of Gethsemane, *Christ suffered in man's stead*, and the human nature of the Son of God staggered under the terrible horror of the guilt of sin. . . .

The power that inflicted *retributive justice upon man's substitute and surety*, was the power that sustained and upheld the suffering One under the tremendous weight of wrath that would have fallen upon a sinful world. *Christ was suffering the death that was pronounced upon the transgressors of God's law.*—*Manuscript 35, 1895.*

What sustained the Son of God in His betrayal and trial? He saw of the travail of His soul and was satisfied. *He caught a view of the expanse of eternity and saw the happiness of those who through His humiliation should receive pardon and everlasting life.* He was wounded for their transgressions, bruised for their iniquities. The chastisement of their peace was upon Him, and with His stripes they were healed. His ear caught the shout of the redeemed. *He heard the ransomed ones singing the song of Moses and the Lamb.*—*Testimonies*, vol. 8, pp. 43, 44.

#### **VI. Christ Both Sacrificial Offering and Officiating Priest**

The infinite sufficiency of Christ is demonstrated by His bearing the sins of the whole world. *He occupies the double position of offerer and of offering, of priest and of victim.* He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. “The prince of this world cometh,” He declares, “and findeth nothing in Me.” He was a Lamb without blemish, and without spot.—*Letter 192, 1906.*

As the high priest laid aside his gorgeous pontifical robes, and officiated in the white linen dress of a common priest, *so Christ emptied Himself, and took the form of a servant, and offered the sacrifice, Himself the priest, Himself the victim.*—*The Southern Watchman*, Aug. 6, 1903.

**VII. *The Cross Central in the Atonement***

*The cross must occupy the central place because it is the means of man's atonement and because of the influence it exerts on every part of the divine government.*—*Testimonies*, vol. 6, p. 236.

*The atonement of Christ is not a mere skillful way to have our sins pardoned; it is a divine remedy for the cure of transgression and the restoration of spiritual health. It is the heaven-ordained means by which the righteousness of Christ may be not only upon us, but in our hearts and characters.*—Letter 406, 1906.

*Without shedding of blood there is no remission for sin. He must suffer the agony of a public death on the cross, that witness of it might be borne without the shadow of a doubt.*—*Manuscript 101, 1897.*

Adam listened to the words of the tempter, and yielding to his insinuations, fell into sin. *Why was not the death penalty at once enforced in his case?*—*Because a ransom was found.* God's only begotten Son volunteered to take the sin of man upon Himself, and to make an atonement for the fallen race. *There could have been no pardon for sin had this atonement not been made.* Had God pardoned Adam's sin without an atonement, sin would have been immortalized, and would have been perpetuated with a boldness that would have been without restraint.—*The Review and Herald*, April 23, 1901.

In the councils of heaven *the cross was ordained as the means of atonement.* This was to be *God's means of winning men to Him.* Christ came to this earth to show that in humanity He could keep the holy law of God.—*Manuscript 165, 1899.*

*Christ gave Himself an atoning sacrifice for the saving of a lost world.*—*Testimonies*, vol. 8, p. 208.

**VIII. *Atoning Provisions Embrace All Mankind***

*Christ's atonement includes the whole human family. No one, high or low, rich or poor, free or bond, has been left out of the plan of redemption.*—Letter 106, 1900.

*Christ suffered without the gates of Jerusalem, for Calvary was outside the city walls. This was to show that He died, not for the Hebrews alone, but for all mankind.* He proclaims to a fallen world that He is their Redeemer, and urges them to accept the salvation He offers.—*The Watchman*, Sept. 4, 1906.

As the high priest sprinkled the warm blood upon the mercy-seat while the fragrant cloud of incense ascended before God, so,

while we confess our sins and plead the efficacy of Christ's atoning blood, our prayers are to ascend to heaven, fragrant with the merits of our Saviour's character. Notwithstanding our unworthiness, we are to remember that there is One who can take away sin, and who is willing and anxious to save the sinner. *With His own blood He paid the penalty for all wrong-doers.*—*The Review and Herald*, Sept. 29, 1896.

Jesus refused [after the resurrection] to receive the homage of His people until He had the assurance that *His sacrifice* was accepted by the Father. He ascended to the heavenly courts, and from God Himself heard the assurance that *His atonement for the sins of men had been ample*, that *through His blood all might gain eternal life.*—*The Desire of Ages*, p. 790.

The sins of the people were transferred in figure to the officiating priest, who was a mediator for the people. The priest could not himself become an offering for sin, and make an atonement with his life, for he was also a sinner. Therefore, instead of suffering death himself, he killed a lamb without blemish; the penalty of sin was transferred to the innocent beast, which thus became his immediate substitute, and typified the perfect offering of Jesus Christ. Through the blood of this victim, *man looked forward by faith to the blood of Christ which would atone for the sins of the world.*—*The Signs of the Times*, March 14, 1878.

#### IX. Manifold Results of the Atonement

*The atonement of Christ sealed forever the everlasting covenant of grace.* It was the fulfilling of every condition upon which God suspended the free communication of grace to the human family. *Every barrier was then broken down which intercepted the freest fulness of the exercise of grace, mercy, peace and love to the most guilty of Adam's race.*—Manuscript 92, 1899.

In our behalf He died on the cross of Calvary. He has paid the price. *Justice is satisfied.* Those who believe in Christ, those who realize that they are sinners, and that as sinners they must confess their sins, *will receive pardon full and free.*—Letter 52, 1906.

*By transgression man was severed from God, the communion between them was broken, but Jesus Christ died upon the cross of Calvary, bearing in His body the sins of the whole world; and the gulf between heaven and earth was bridged by that cross.* Christ leads men to the gulf, and points to the bridge by which it is spanned, saying, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." God gives

us a probation in which we may prove whether or not we will be loyal to Him.—Manuscript 21, 1895.

*The atoning sacrifice seen through faith brings peace and comfort and hope to the trembling soul weighed down beneath the sense of guilt. The law of God is the detector of sin, and as the sinner is drawn to the dying Christ, he sees the grievous character of sin, and repents and lays hold on the remedy, the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world.—The Review and Herald, Sept. 2, 1890.*

*Thus, through the crucifixion of Christ, human beings are reconciled to God. Christ adopts the outcasts, and they become His special care, members of the family of God, because they have accepted His Son as their Saviour. To them is given power to become the sons of God, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. They gain an intelligent knowledge of what Christ is to them and of the blessings they may receive as members of the Lord's family. And in His infinite condescension God is pleased to stand to them in the relation of Father.—Letter 255, 1904.*

*The world does not acknowledge that, at an infinite cost, Christ has purchased the human race. They do not acknowledge that by creation and by redemption He holds a just claim to every human being. But as the Redeemer of the fallen race, He has been given the deed of possession, which entitles Him to claim them as His property.—Letter 136, 1902.*

*Christ pledged Himself to become his substitute and surety, giving man a second trial. When man transgressed even the smallest precept of Jehovah, it was disobedience just the same as though the test were larger. But how is the grace, mercy, and love provided! The divinity of Christ undertook to bear the sins of the transgressor. This ransom is on solid ground; this pledged peace is for the heart that receives Jesus Christ. And in receiving Him by faith we are blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.—Manuscript 114, 1897.*

*Christ received His death wound, which was the trophy of His victory, and the victory of all who believe in Him. These wounds annihilated the power of Satan over every loyal, believing subject in Jesus Christ. By the suffering and death of Christ, human intelligences, fallen because of the sin of Adam, are through their acceptance of Christ and faith in Him, elevated to become heirs of immortality and an eternal weight of glory. The gates of the heavenly Paradise are thrown open to the inhabitants of this*

*fallen world. Through faith in the righteousness of Christ, rebels against the law of God may lay hold upon the Infinite, and become partakers of everlasting life.*—Letter 103, 1894.

“And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die.” This is the crisis of the world. If I become the propitiation for the world, it will be lighted up. The defaced image of God would be reproduced and restored, and *a family of believing saints will finally inhabit the heavenly home.* This is the result of the crucifixion of Christ and *the restoration of the world.*—Manuscript 33, 1897.

Our ransom has been paid by our Saviour. No one need be enslaved by Satan. *Christ stands before us as our divine example, our all powerful Helper.* We have been bought with a price that it is impossible to compute. Who can measure the goodness and mercy of redeeming love?—Manuscript 76, 1903.

God testified to *the great work of atonement* in reconciling the world to Himself, by giving Christ’s followers a true understanding of the kingdom which He was establishing upon the earth, the foundation of which His own hand had laid.

The Father gave all honor to His Son, seating Him at His right hand, far above all principalities and power. He expressed His great joy and delight in receiving the Crucified One, and crowning Him with glory and honor. *And all the favors He has shown to His Son in His acceptance of the great atonement are shown to His people.* Those who have united their interests in love with Christ are accepted in the Beloved. They suffer with Christ, and His glorification is of great interest to them, because they are accepted in Him. God loves them as He loves His Son.—*The Signs of the Times*, Aug. 16, 1899.

#### **X. Righteousness Provided Through Atonement**

It was evident to him that the law did not abate one jot of its justice, *but through the atoning sacrifice, through the imputed righteousness of Christ, the repentant sinner stands justified before the law.*

Christ bore the penalty that would have fallen upon the transgressor; and through faith the helpless, hopeless sinner becomes a partaker of the divine nature, escaping the corruption that is in the world through lust. *Christ imputes His perfection and righteousness to the believing sinner* when he does not continue in sin, but turns from transgression to obedience of the commandments.—*The Review and Herald*, May 23, 1899.

The only One who could with hope approach God in humanity was the only begotten Son of God. That sinful, repentant human beings might be received by the Father, and clothed with the robe of righteousness, Christ came to the earth, and made an offering of such value that He redeemed the race. *Through the sacrifice made on Calvary is offered to everyone the sanctification of grace.*—Letter 67, 1902.

It is only *through faith in Christ that sinners may have the righteousness of Christ imputed unto them*, and that they may be “made the righteousness of God in him.” Our sins were laid on Christ, punished in Christ, put away by Christ, in order that *His righteousness might be imputed to us*, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. Although *sin was charged to His account on our behalf, yet He remained perfectly sinless.*—*The Signs of the Times*, May 30, 1895.

The Lord made a full and complete sacrifice upon the cross, the shameful cross, that *men might be complete in the great and precious gift of His righteousness*. We have God’s pledge that He will bind men closely to His great heart of infinite love in the bonds of the new covenant of grace. All who will give up their hope of paying for their salvation, or earning it, and will come to Jesus just as they are, unworthy, sinful, and fall upon His merits, holding in their plea the pledged word of God to pardon the transgressor of His law, confessing their sins and seeking pardon, *will find full and free salvation.*—Letter 148, 1897.

#### XI. *Redemptive Price Completely Paid on Calvary*

*The ransom paid by Christ—the atonement on the cross—is ever before them.*—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 190.

On the cross of Calvary *He paid the redemption price of the race*. And thus *He gained the right to rescue the captives from the grasp of the great deceiver*, who by a lie framed against the government of God, caused the fall of man, and who thus forfeited all claim to be called a loyal subject of God’s kingdom.

Satan refused to let his captives go. He held them as his subjects because of their belief of his lie. He had thus become their jailor. But he had no right to demand that a price be paid for them; because he had not obtained possession of them by lawful conquest, but under false pretense.

God, being the creditor, had a right to make any provision for the redemption of human beings. *Justice demanded that a certain price be paid. The Son of God was the only One who could pay*

*this price. He volunteered to come to this earth and pass over the ground where Adam fell. He came as the redeemer of the lost race, to conquer the wily foe, and by His steadfast allegiance to right, to save all who should accept Him as their Saviour.—Letter 20, 1903.*

*Christ alone could bear the message of man's deliverance. He came with a full and complete ransom. He came to bring life and immortality within the reach of the fallen race. As the Life-giver, He assumed our nature, that He might reveal the character of God, and stamp His image on all who would receive Him. He became man that through His infinite sacrifice God might receive the homage of the restored race. . . . The science of redemption is as high as heaven, and its value is infinite. This truth is so broad, so deep, so high, that beside it all the wisdom of earth's wisest men sinks into insignificance. In comparison with the knowledge of God, all human knowledge is as chaff. And the way of salvation can be made known only by God.—Manuscript 69, 1897.*

*All that God and Christ could do has been done to save sinners. Transgression placed the whole world in jeopardy, under the death sentence. But in heaven there was heard a voice saying, I have found a ransom. *Jesus Christ, who knew no sin, was made sin for fallen man.* "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Christ gave Himself as a ransom. He laid off His royal robe. He laid aside His kingly crown, and stepped down from His high command over all heaven, clothing His divinity with humanity that He might carry all the infirmities and bear all the temptations of humanity.—Letter 22, 1900.*

### **XII. Justice and Mercy Blend at Cross**

Justice and Mercy stood apart, in opposition to each other, separated by a wide gulf. The Lord our Redeemer clothed His divinity with humanity, and wrought out in behalf of man a character that was without spot or blemish. He planted His cross midway between heaven and earth, and made it the object of attraction which reached both ways, drawing both Justice and Mercy across the gulf. *Justice moved from its exalted throne, and with all the armies of heaven approached the cross. There it saw One equal with God bearing the penalty for all injustice and sin. With perfect satisfaction Justice bowed in reverence at the cross, saying, It is enough.*—General Conference Bulletin, Fourth Quarter, 1899, vol. 3, p. 102.

*Christ's death proved God's administration and government to be without a flaw. Satan's charge in regard to the conflicting attributes of justice and mercy was forever settled beyond question. Every voice in heaven and out of heaven will one day testify to the justice, mercy, and exalted attributes of God. It was in order that the heavenly universe might see the conditions of the covenant of redemption that Christ bore the penalty in behalf of the human race.—Manuscript 128, 1897.*

*His [Christ's] object was to reconcile the prerogatives of justice and mercy, and let each stand separate in its dignity, yet united. His mercy was not weakness, but a terrible power to punish sin because it is sin; yet a power to draw to it the love of humanity. Through Christ Justice is enabled to forgive without sacrificing one jot of its exalted holiness.—General Conference Bulletin, Fourth Quarter, 1899, vol. 3, p. 102.*

Justice demands that sin be not merely pardoned, but the death penalty must be executed. God, in the gift of His only begotten Son, met both these requirements. By dying in man's stead, *Christ exhausted the penalty and provided a pardon.—Manuscript 50, 1900.*

*God bowed His head satisfied. Now justice and mercy could blend. Now He could be just, and yet the Justifier of all who should believe on Christ. He [God] looked upon the victim expiring on the cross, and said, "It is finished. The human race shall have another trial."* The redemption price was paid, and Satan fell like lightning from heaven.—*Youth's Instructor*, June 21, 1900.

The only-begotten Son of God took upon Him the nature of man, and established His cross between earth and heaven. *Through the cross, man was drawn to God, and God to man.* Justice moved from its high and awful position, and *the heavenly hosts, the armies of holiness, drew near to the cross, bowing with reverence; for at the cross justice was satisfied.* Through the cross the sinner was drawn from the stronghold of sin, from the confederacy of evil, and at every approach to the cross his heart relents and in penitence he cries, "It was my sins that crucified the Son of God." At the cross he leaves his sins, and through the grace of Christ His character is transformed. *The Redeemer raises the sinner from the dust, and places him under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.—The Signs of the Times*, June 5, 1893.

**XIII. *Atonement Vindicates God's Changeless Law***

*The cross speaks to the hosts of heaven, to worlds unfallen, and to the fallen world, the value which God has placed upon men, and of His great love wherewith He has loved us. It testifies to the world, to angels, and to men, the immutability of the divine law. The death of God's only begotten Son upon the cross in the sinner's behalf is the unanswerable argument as to the changeless character of the law of Jehovah.—The Review and Herald, May 23, 1899.*

*The cross of Christ testifies to the sinner that the law is not changed to meet the sinner in his sins, but that Christ has made an offering of Himself that the transgressors of the law might have an opportunity to repent. As Christ bore the sins of every transgressor so the sinner who will not believe in Christ as his personal Saviour, who rejects the light that comes to him, and refuses to respect and obey the commandments of God, will bear the penalty of his transgression.—Manuscript 133, 1897.*

*The death of Christ was to be the convincing, everlasting argument that the law of God is as unchangeable as His throne. The agonies of the garden of Gethsemane, the insult, the mockery, the abuse heaped upon God's dear Son, the horrors and ignominy of the crucifixion, furnish sufficient and thrilling demonstration that God's justice, when it punishes, does the work thoroughly. The fact that His own Son, the Surety for man, was not spared, is an argument that will stand to all eternity before saint and sinner, before the universe of God, to testify that He will not excuse the transgressor of His law.—Manuscript 58, 1897.*

Satan is continuing the work on earth that he commenced in heaven. He leads men to transgress the commandments of God. The plain "Thus saith the Lord" is put aside for the "thus saith" of men. The whole world needs to be instructed in the oracles of God, to understand the object of the atonement, the at-one-ment, with God. *The object of this atonement was that the divine law and government might be maintained.* The sinner is pardoned through repentance toward God and faith in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. There is forgiveness of sin, and yet *the law of God stands immutable, eternal as His throne.* There is no such thing as weakening or strengthening the law of Jehovah. *As it has always been, so it is. It cannot be repealed or changed in one principle. It is eternal, immutable as God Himself.—Manuscript 163, 1897.*

Satan endeavored to keep hidden from the world the great atoning sacrifice which reveals the law in all its sacred dignity, and impresses hearts with the force of its binding claims. He was warring against the work of Christ, and united all his evil angels with human instrumentalities in opposition to that work. But while he was carrying on this work, heavenly intelligences were combining with human instrumentalities in the work of restoration. *The cross stands as the great center of the world, bearing a certain testimony that the cross of Christ will be the condemnation of every transgressor of the law of God.* Here are the two great powers, the power of truth and righteousness and the working of Satan to make of none effect the law of God.—Manuscript 61, 1899.

*The death of Christ removes every argument that Satan could bring against the precepts of Jehovah.* Satan has declared that men could not enter the kingdom of heaven unless the law was abolished, and a way devised by which transgressors could be reinstated into the favor of God, and made heirs of heaven. He made the claim that the law must be changed, that the reins of government must be slackened in heaven, that sin must be tolerated, and sinners pitied and saved in their sins. But *every such plea was cast aside when Christ died as a substitute for the sinner.* —*The Signs of the Times*, May 21, 1912.

#### XIV. Atonement Result of Divine Love

*The atonement of Christ* was not made in order to induce God to love those whom He otherwise hated; and it was not made to produce a love that was not in existence; but it was made as a *manifestation of the love that was already in God's heart*, an exponent of the divine favor in the sight of heavenly intelligences, in the sight of worlds unfallen, and in the sight of a fallen race. . . . We are not to entertain the idea that God loves us because Christ has died for us, but that *He so loved us that He gave His only-begotten Son to die for us.*—*The Signs of the Times*, May 30, 1893.

As the Saviour is lifted up before the people, they will see His humiliation, His self-denial, His self-sacrifice, His goodness, His tender compassion, His sufferings to save fallen man, and will realize that *the atonement of Christ was not the cause of God's love, but the result of that love.* Jesus died because God loved the world. —*The Review and Herald*, Sept. 2, 1890.

The Father loves us, not because of the great propitiation, but

*He provided the propitiation because He loves us. Christ was the medium through which He could pour out His infinite love upon a fallen world. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." God suffered with His Son, in the agony of Gethsemane, the death of Calvary; the heart of Infinite Love paid the price of our redemption.—The Home Missionary, April, 1893.*

#### **XV. Atoning Provision Greater Than Man's Need**

*Justice demanded the sufferings of a man. Christ, equal with God, gave the sufferings of a God. He needed no atonement. His suffering was not for any sin He had committed; it was for man—all for man; and His free pardon is accessible to all. The suffering of Christ was in correspondence with His spotless purity; His depth of agony, proportionate to the dignity and grandeur of His character. Never can we comprehend the intense anguish of the spotless Lamb of God, until we realize how deep is the pit from which we have been rescued, how grievous is the sin of which mankind is guilty, and by faith grasp the full and entire pardon.—The Review and Herald, Sept. 21, 1886.*

*The divine Son of God was the only sacrifice of sufficient value to fully satisfy the claims of God's perfect law. The angels were sinless, but of less value than the law of God. They were amenable to law. They were messengers to do the will of Christ, and before Him to bow. They were created beings, and probationers. Upon Christ no requirements were laid. He had power to lay down His life, and to take it again. No obligation was laid upon Him to undertake the work of atonement. It was a voluntary sacrifice that He made. His life was of sufficient value to rescue man from his fallen condition.—The Review and Herald, Dec. 17, 1872.*

The work of God's dear Son in undertaking to link the created with the Uncreated, the finite with the Infinite, in His own divine person, is a subject that may well employ our thoughts for a lifetime. *This work of Christ was to confirm the beings of other worlds in their innocence and loyalty, as well as to save the lost and perishing of this world.* He opened a way for the disobedient to return to their allegiance to God, while by the same act He placed a safeguard around those who were already pure, that they might not become polluted.—*The Review and Herald, Jan. 11, 1881.*

**XVI. Typical Sacrifices Prefigure Lamb of God**

*The sacrificial offerings, and the priesthood of the Jewish system, were instituted to represent the death and mediatorial work of Christ. All those ceremonies had no meaning, and no virtue, only as they related to Christ, who was Himself the foundation of, and who brought into existence, the entire system. The Lord had made known to Adam, Abel, Seth, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and the ancient worthies, especially Moses, that the ceremonial system of sacrifices and the priesthood, of themselves, were not sufficient to secure the salvation of one soul.*

*The system of sacrificial offerings pointed to Christ. Through these, the ancient worthies saw Christ, and believed in Him.—The Review and Herald, Dec. 17, 1872.*

*Christ, in counsel with His Father, instituted the system of sacrificial offerings; that death, instead of being immediately visited upon the transgressor, should be transferred to a victim which should prefigure the great and perfect offering of the Son of God.*

*The sins of the people were transferred in figure to the officiating priest, who was a mediator for the people. The priest could not himself become an offering for sin, and make an atonement with his life, for he was also a sinner. Therefore, instead of suffering death himself, he killed a lamb without blemish; the penalty of sin was transferred to the innocent beast, which thus became his immediate substitute, and typified the perfect offering of Jesus Christ. Through the blood of this victim, man looked forward by faith to the blood of Christ which would atone for the sins of the world.—The Signs of the Times, March 14, 1878.*

*The great truth that was to be kept before men, and imprinted upon mind and heart, was this, “Without shedding of blood is no remission.” In every bleeding sacrifice was typified “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” Christ Himself was the originator of the Jewish system of worship, in which, by types and symbols, were shadowed forth spiritual and heavenly things. Many forgot the true significance of these offerings; and the great truth that through Christ alone there is forgiveness of sin, was lost to them. The multiplying of sacrificial offerings, the blood of bulls and goats, could not take away sin.—The Signs of the Times, Jan. 2, 1893.*

*The great lesson embodied in the sacrifice of every bleeding victim, impressed in every ceremony, inculcated by God Himself*

*was that through the blood of Christ alone is forgiveness of sins; yet how many carry the galling yoke and how few feel the force of this truth and act upon it, personally, and derive the blessings they might through a perfect faith in the blood of the Lamb of God, realizing that through Him only is forgiveness of sins, believing that when repented of He forgives them, whether great or small. O! What a blessed Saviour!—Letter 12, 1892.*

*By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. . . . Through the shed blood he looked forward to the future sacrifice, Christ dying on the cross of Calvary; and trusting in the atonement that was there to be made, he had witness that he was righteous, and his offering accepted.—Patriarchs and Prophets, p. 72.*

#### XVII. *The Cross Gave Death Stroke to Satan*

*He [Christ] died on the cross to give the death-stroke to Satan, and to take away the sin of every believing soul.—Manuscript 61, 1903.*

What right had Christ to take the captives out of the enemy's hands? The right of having made a sacrifice that satisfies the principles of justice by which the kingdom of heaven is governed. He came to this earth as the Redeemer of the lost race, to conquer the wily foe, and, by His steadfast allegiance to right, to save all who accept Him as their Saviour. *On the cross of Calvary He paid the redemption price of the race. And thus He gained the right to take the captives from the grasp of the great deceiver*, who, by a lie, framed against the government of God, caused the fall of man, and thus forfeited all claim to be called a loyal subject of God's glorious everlasting kingdom.—*The Signs of the Times*, Sept. 30, 1903.

*Christ on the cross not only draws men to repentance toward God for the transgression of His law—for whom God pardons He first makes penitent—but Christ has satisfied Justice; He has proffered Himself as an atonement. His gushing blood, His broken body satisfy the claims of the broken law, and thus He bridges the gulf which sin has made. He suffered in the flesh that with His bruised and broken body He might cover the defenseless sinner. The victory gained at His death on Calvary broke forever the accusing power of Satan over the universe and silenced his charges that self-denial was impossible with God and therefore not essential in the human family.—Manuscript 50, 1900.*

He [Christ] planted His cross midway between heaven and

earth, that He might wrestle with and overcome the powers of darkness. *He gave His life for the life of sinners, and Satan, the prince of the world, was cast out.*—Manuscript 44, 1901.

Soon was to be offered the great Sacrifice to which all the Jewish offerings pointed. *When with the cross before Him, the Saviour uttered the sublime prediction, "Now shall the prince of this world be cast out.* And I, if I be lifted up, shall draw all men unto me," He saw that the great apostate, who had been expelled from heaven, was the central power in the earth. *Looking for Satan's throne, He found it set up where God's should have been.* He saw all men worshiping the apostate, who inspired them with rebellion. The inhabitants of this world had prostrated themselves at Satan's feet. Christ declared, *Where stands Satan's throne, there shall stand My cross*, the instrument of humiliation and suffering.—Manuscript 165, 1899.

*Christ was crucified, but in wondrous power and glory He rose from the tomb. He took in His grasp the world over which Satan claimed to preside, and restored the human race to favor with God. And at this glorious completion of His work, songs of triumph echoed and re-echoed through the unfallen worlds. Angel and archangel, cherubim and seraphim, joined in the chorus of victory.*—*The Youth's Instructor*, April 16, 1903.

### XVIII. *Atonement Never to Be Repeated*

The death of Christ upon the cross made sure the destruction of him who has the power of death, who was the originator of sin. When Satan is destroyed, there will be none to tempt to evil; *the atonement will never need to be repeated; and there will be no danger of another rebellion in the universe of God.* That which alone can effectually restrain from sin in this world of darkness, will prevent sin in heaven. The significance of the death of Christ will be seen by saints and angels. *Fallen men could not have a home in the paradise of God without the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Shall we not then exalt the cross of Christ?*—*The Signs of the Times*, Dec. 30, 1889.

## PART II—HIGH-PRIESTLY APPLICATION OF ATONING SACRIFICE

### I. *Ministers the Benefits of Complete Atoning Sacrifice*

*These are our themes—Christ crucified for our sins, Christ risen from the dead, Christ our intercessor before God; and closely*

connected with these is the office work of the Holy Spirit.—*Evangelism*, p. 187.

*The great Sacrifice had been offered and had been accepted*, and the Holy Spirit which descended on the day of Pentecost carried the minds of the disciples from the earthly sanctuary to the heavenly, where *Jesus had entered by His own blood, to shed upon His disciples the benefits of His atonement*.—*Early Writings*, p. 260.

*Our Saviour is in the sanctuary pleading in our behalf. He is our interceding High Priest, making an atoning sacrifice for us, pleading in our behalf the efficacy of His blood*.—*Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 370.

*Every one who will break from the slavery and service of Satan, and will stand under the blood-stained banner of Prince Immanuel, will be kept by Christ's intercessions. Christ, as our Mediator, at the right hand of the Father, ever keeps us in view, for it is as necessary that He should keep us by His intercessions as that He should redeem us with His blood. If He lets go His hold of us for one moment, Satan stands ready to destroy. Those purchased by His blood, He now keeps by His intercession*.—Manuscript 73, 1893.

*Thank God that He who spilled His blood for us, lives to plead it, lives to make intercession for every soul who receives Him. . . . We need to keep ever before us the efficacy of the blood of Jesus. That life-cleansing, life-sustaining blood, appropriated by living faith, is our hope. We need to grow in appreciation of its inestimable value, for it speaks for us only as we by faith claim its virtue, keeping the conscience clean and at peace with God.*

*This is represented as the pardoning blood, inseparably connected with the resurrection and life of our Redeemer, illustrated by the ever-flowing stream that proceeds from the throne of God, the water of the river of life*.—Letter 87, 1894.

*Christ died to make an atoning sacrifice for our sins. At the Father's right hand He is interceding for us as our High Priest. By the sacrifice of His life He purchased redemption for us. His atonement is effectual for every one who will humble himself, and receive Christ as his example in all things. If the Saviour had not given His life as a propitiation for our sins, the whole human family would have perished. They would have had no right to heaven. It is through His intercession that we, through faith,*

repentance, and conversion, are enabled to become partakers of the divine nature, and thus escape the corruption that is in the world through lust.—Manuscript 29, 1906.

*This prayer [of John 17] is a lesson regarding the intercession that the Saviour would carry on within the veil, when His great sacrifice in behalf of men, the offering of Himself, should have been completed. Our Mediator gave His disciples this illustration of His ministration in the heavenly sanctuary in behalf of all who will come to Him in meekness and humility, emptied of all selfishness, and believing in His power to save.—Manuscript 29, 1906 (SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 5, p. 1145).*

## *II. Ministry Applies and Completes Transaction of Cross*

*The intercession of Christ in man's behalf in the sanctuary above is as essential to the plan of salvation as was His death upon the cross. By His death He began that work which after His resurrection He ascended to complete in heaven. We must by faith enter within the veil, "whither the forerunner is for us entered." Hebrews 6:20. There the light from the cross of Calvary is reflected. There we may gain a clearer insight into the mysteries of redemption.—The Great Controversy, p. 489.*

*Christ's words on the mountainside were the announcement that His sacrifice in behalf of man was full and complete. The conditions of the atonement had been fulfilled; the work for which He came to this world had been accomplished. He had won the kingdom. He had wrested it from Satan, and had become heir of all things. He was on His way to the throne of God, to be honored by angels, principalities, and powers. He had entered upon His mediatorial work. Clothed with boundless authority, He gave His commission to the disciples, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."—Manuscript 138, 1897.*

*Thank God that He who spilled His blood for us, lives to plead it, lives to make intercession for every soul who receives Him. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. It speaketh better things*

than the blood of Abel, for Christ ever liveth to make intercession for us. *We need to keep ever before us the efficacy of the blood of Jesus.*—Letter 87, 1894.

*Jesus stands before the Father, continually offering a sacrifice for the sins of the world. He is the minister of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man. The typical offerings of the Jewish tabernacle no longer possess any virtue. A daily and yearly atonement is no longer necessary. But because of the continual commission of sin, the atoning sacrifice of a heavenly Mediator is essential. Jesus, our great high priest, officiates for us in the presence of God, offering in our behalf His shed blood.*—*The Youth's Instructor*, April 16, 1903.

By His spotless life, His obedience, His death on the cross of Calvary, Christ interceded for the lost race. And now, *not as a mere petitioner does the Captain of our salvation intercede for us, but as a conqueror claiming His victory. His offering is complete, and as our intercessor He executes His self-appointed work, holding before God the censer containing His own spotless merits and the prayers, confessions, and thanksgiving of His people.* Perfumed with the fragrance of His righteousness, these ascend to God as a sweet savor. The offering is wholly acceptable, and pardon covers all transgression. *To the true believer Christ is indeed the minister of the sanctuary, officiating for him in the sanctuary, and speaking through God's appointed agencies.*—*The Signs of the Times*, Feb. 14, 1900.

*In the courts above, Christ is pleading for His church—pleading for those for whom He has paid the redemption price of His blood. Centuries, ages, can never lessen the efficacy of His atoning sacrifice. Neither life nor death, height nor depth, can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus; not because we hold Him so firmly, but because He holds us so fast.*—*The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 552, 553.

Jesus is our great High Priest in heaven. And what is He doing?—*He is making intercession and atonement for His people who believe in Him.*—*Testimonies to Ministers*, p. 37.

*God is approached through Jesus Christ, the Mediator, the only way through which He forgives sins. God cannot forgive sins at the expense of His justice, His holiness, and His truth. But He does forgive sins and that fully. There are no sins He will not forgive in and through the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the sinner's only hope, and if he rests here in sincere faith, he is sure of par-*

don and that full and free. *There is only one channel and that is accessible to all*, and through that channel a rich and abundant forgiveness awaits the penitent, contrite soul and the darkest sins are forgiven.

These lessons were taught to the chosen people of God thousands of years ago; repeated in various symbols and figures that the work of truth might be riveted in every heart, that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins.—Letter 12, 1892.

*Christ died for us, and receiving His perfection, we are entitled to heaven.* To all who believe in Him, He gives power to become the sons of God. Because He lives, we shall live also. *He is our Advocate in the courts above. This is our only hope.*—Manuscript 29, 1906.

By pledging His own life, *Christ has made Himself responsible for every man and woman on the earth. He stands in the presence of God, saying, Father, I take upon Myself the guilt of that soul.* It means death to him if he is left to bear it. If he repents, he shall be forgiven. *My blood shall cleanse him from all sin.* I gave My life for the sins of the world.

If the transgressor of God's law will see in Christ his atoning sacrifice, if he will believe in Him who can cleanse from all unrighteousness, Christ will not have died for him in vain.—*The Review and Herald*, Feb. 27, 1900.

"In all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God [mark the words], to make reconciliation for the sins of the people," through the atonement. *The repenting sinner is to believe in Christ as his personal Saviour. This is his only hope. He may lay hold on the merits of the blood of Christ, presenting to God the crucified and risen Saviour as his worthiness.* Thus through Christ's offering of Himself, the innocent for the guilty, every obstruction is removed, and the pardoning love of God flows forth in rich streams of mercy to fallen man.—Letter 91, 1895.

As we acknowledge before God our appreciation of Christ's merits, fragrance is given to our intercessions. Oh, who can value this great mercy and love. *As we approach God through the virtue of Christ's merits, we are clothed with His priestly vestments. He places us close by His side, encircling us with His human arm, while with His divine arm He grasps the throne of the Infinite.* He puts His merits, as sweet incense, in a censer in their

hands, in order to encourage their petitions. He promises to hear and answer their supplications.—Letter 22, 1898.

Today He [Christ] is making an atonement for us before the Father. "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Pointing to the palms of His hands, pierced by the fury and prejudice of wicked men, He says of us, "I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands" [Isa. 49:16]. *The Father bows in recognition of the price paid for humanity*, and the angels approach the cross of Calvary with reverence. *What a sacrifice is this! Who can fathom it! It will take the whole of eternity for man to understand the plan of redemption.* It will open to him line upon line, here a little and there a little.—Manuscript 21, 1895.

### III. *Christ Ministering in Heavenly Sanctuary*

*We are in the great day of atonement, and the sacred work of Christ for the people of God that is going on at the present time [1882] in the heavenly sanctuary, should be our constant study.*—*Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 520.

*O that all could behold our precious Saviour as He is*, a Saviour. Let His hand draw aside the veil which conceals His glory from our eyes. It shows Him in His high and holy place. What do we see? Our Saviour, not in a position of silence and inactivity. He is surrounded with heavenly intelligences, cherubims and seraphims, ten thousand times ten thousand of angels. *All these heavenly beings have one object above all others, in which they are intensely interested*,—*His church in a world of corruption*.—Letter 89c, 1897.

He is in His holy place, not in a state of solitude and grandeur, but surrounded by ten thousand times ten thousand of heavenly beings who wait to do their Master's bidding. And *He bids them go and work for the weakest saint who puts his trust in God. High and low, rich and poor, have the same help provided*.—Letter 134, 1899.

Do not place your influence against God's commandments. That law is just as Jehovah wrote it in the temple of heaven. Man may trample upon its copy here below, but the original is kept in the ark of God in heaven; and on the cover of this ark, right above that law, is the mercy seat. Jesus stands right there before that ark to mediate for man.—Manuscript 6a, 1886 (SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 1, p. 1109).

We all need to keep the subject of the sanctuary in mind. God forbid that the clatter of words coming from human lips should lessen the belief of our people in the truth that *there is a sanctuary in heaven*, and that a pattern of this sanctuary was once built on this earth. *God desires His people to become familiar with this pattern, keeping ever before their minds the heavenly sanctuary, where God is all and in all.*—Letter 233, 1904.

*Jesus is our Advocate, our High Priest, our Intercessor. Our position is like that of the Israelites on the Day of Atonement. When the High Priest entered the most holy place, representing the place where our High Priest is now pleading, and sprinkled the atoning blood upon the mercy seat, no propitiatory sacrifices were offered without. While the priest was interceding with God, every heart was to be bowed in contrition, pleading for the pardon of transgression.*—*The Signs of the Times*, June 28, 1899.

#### **IV. Second Phase of Priesthood Embraces Judgment**

He fulfilled one phase of His priesthood by dying on the cross for the fallen race. He is now fulfilling another phase by pleading before the Father the case of the repenting, believing sinner, presenting to God the offerings of His people. Having taken human nature and in this nature having overcome the temptations of the enemy, and having divine perfection, to Him has been committed the judgment of the world. The case of each one will be brought in review before Him. He will pronounce judgment, rendering to every man according to his works.—Manuscript 42, 1901.

#### **V. Perpetual Intercession**

*The incense, ascending with the prayers of Israel, represents the merits and intercession of Christ, His perfect righteousness, which through faith is imputed to His people, and which can alone make the worship of sinful beings acceptable to God. Before the veil of the most holy place, was an altar of perpetual intercession, before the holy, an altar of continual atonement. By blood and by incense, God was to be approached—symbols pointing to the great Mediator, through whom sinners may approach Jehovah, and through whom alone mercy and salvation can be granted to the repentant, believing soul.*—*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 353.

In the service of the Jewish priesthood we are continually re-

minded of the sacrifice and intercession of Christ. *All who come to Christ today are to remember that His merit is the incense that mingles with the prayers of those who repent of their sins and receive pardon and mercy and grace. Our need of Christ's intercession is constant.*—Manuscript 14, 1901.

#### VI. *Christ Both Mediator and Judge*

By personal experience Christ is acquainted with the warfare which, since Adam's fall, has been constantly going on. How appropriate, then, for Him to be the judge. *To Jesus, the Son of man, is committed all judgment. There is one mediator between God and men. Only by Him can we enter the kingdom of heaven.* He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. *From His decision there is no appeal.* He is the Rock of ages, a rock rent on purpose that every tried, tempted soul may find a sure hiding place.—*The Review and Herald*, March 12, 1901.

*"The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." "He hath given him authority to execute judgment also because he is the Son of man." In His superadded humanity consists the reason of Christ's appointment. God has committed all judgment unto the Son, for without controversy He is God manifest in the flesh.*

*God designed that the Prince of sufferers in humanity should be judge of the whole world.* He who came from the heavenly courts to save man from eternal death; He whom men despised, rejected, and upon whom they heaped all the contempt of which human beings, inspired by Satan, are capable; *He who submitted to be arraigned before an earthly tribunal, and who suffered the ignominious death of the cross,—He alone is to pronounce the sentence of reward or of punishment.* He who submitted to the suffering and humiliation of the cross here, in the counsel of God is to have the fullest compensation, and ascend the throne acknowledged by all the heavenly universe as the King of saints. *He has undertaken the work of salvation, and shown before unfallen worlds and the heavenly family that the work He has begun He is able to complete.* It is Christ who gives men the grace of repentance; His merits are accepted by the Father in behalf of every soul that will help to compose the family of God.

*In that day of final punishment and reward, both saints and sinners will recognize in Him who was crucified the Judge of all living.*—*The Review and Herald*, Nov. 22, 1898.

**VII. Wondrous Results of Christ's Priestly Mediation**

*The intercession of Christ is as a golden chain fastened to the throne of God. He has turned the merit of His sacrifice into prayer. Jesus prays, and by prayer succeeds.—Manuscript 8, 1892.*

*As our Mediator, Christ works incessantly. Whether men receive or reject Him, He works earnestly for them. He grants them life and light, striving by His Spirit to win them from Satan's service. And while the Saviour works, Satan also works, with all deceivableness of unrighteousness, and with unflagging energy.—The Review and Herald, March 12, 1901.*

*This Saviour was to be a mediator, to stand between the Most High and His people. Through this provision, a way was opened whereby the guilty sinner might find access to God through the mediation of another. The sinner could not come in his own person, with his guilt upon him, and with no greater merit than he possessed in himself. Christ alone could open the way, by making an offering equal to the demands of the divine law. He was perfect, and undefiled by sin. He was without spot or blemish.*  
—*The Review and Herald, Dec. 17, 1872.*

*Christ is the Minister of the true tabernacle, the High Priest of all who believe in Him as a personal Saviour; and His office no other can take. He is the High Priest of the church, and He has a work to do which no other can perform. By His grace He is able to keep every man from transgression.—The Signs of the Times, Feb. 14, 1900.*

*Faith in the atonement and intercession of Christ will keep us steadfast and immovable amid the temptations that press upon us in the church militant.—The Review and Herald, June 9, 1896.*

*The great plan of redemption, as revealed in the closing work for these last days, should receive close examination. The scenes connected with the sanctuary above should make such an impression upon the minds and hearts of all that they may be able to impress others. All need to become more intelligent in regard to the work of the atonement, which is going on in the sanctuary above. When this grand truth is seen and understood, those who hold it will work in harmony with Christ to prepare a people to stand in the great day of God, and their efforts will be successful.*  
—*Testimonies, vol. 5, p. 575.*

Christ's priestly intercession is now going on in our behalf in

the sanctuary above. But how few have a real understanding that *our great High Priest presents before the Father His own blood, claiming for the sinner who receives Him as his personal Saviour all the graces which His covenant embraces* as the reward of His sacrifice. This sacrifice made Him abundantly able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him, seeing *He liveth to make intercession for them*.—Manuscript 92, 1899.

*Christ as High Priest within the veil so immortalized Calvary*, that though He liveth unto God, He dies continually to sin and thus *if any man sin, he has an Advocate with the Father*. He arose from the tomb enshrouded with a cloud of angels in wondrous power and glory,—the *Deity and humanity combined*. He took in His grasp the world over which Satan claimed to preside as his lawful territory, and by His wonderful work in giving His life, *He restored the whole race of men to favor with God*. The songs of triumph echoed and re-echoed through the worlds. Angel and archangel, cherubim and seraphim, sang the triumphant song at the amazing achievement.—Manuscript 50, 1900.

This is the great day of atonement, and *our Advocate is standing before the Father, pleading as our Intercessor*. In place of wrapping about us the garments of self-righteousness, *we should be found daily humbling ourselves before God, confessing our own individual sins, seeking the pardon of our transgressions, and cooperating with Christ in the work of preparing our souls to reflect the divine image*.—Manuscript 168, 1898 (SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 7, Ellen G. White Comments, on Hebrews 10:19-21).

As our Mediator, Jesus was fully able to accomplish this work of redemption; but O, at what a price! *The sinless Son of God was condemned for the sin in which He had no part, in order that the sinner, through repentance and faith, might be justified by the righteousness of Christ, in which he had no personal merit*. The sins of every one who has lived upon the earth were laid upon Christ, testifying to the fact that no one need be a loser in the conflict with Satan. Provision has been made that all may lay hold of the strength of Him who will save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him.

*Christ receives upon Him the guilt of man's transgression, while He lays upon all who receive Him by faith, who return to their allegiance to God, His own spotless righteousness*.—The Review and Herald, May 23, 1899.

*He holds before the Father the censer of His own merits, in*

*which there is no taint of earthly corruption. He gathers into this censer the prayers, the praise, and the confessions of His people, and with these He puts His own spotless righteousness. Then, perfumed with the merits of Christ's propitiation, the incense comes up before God wholly and entirely acceptable. Then gracious answers are returned. . . . The fragrance of this righteousness ascends like a cloud around the mercy seat.—Manuscript 50, 1900 (SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 6, on Rom. 8:26, 34).*

### VIII. *Christ Is Our Friend at Court*

*Our great High Priest is pleading before the mercy-seat in behalf of His ransomed people. . . . Satan stands at our right hand to accuse us, and our advocate stands at God's right hand to plead for us. He has never lost a case that has been committed to Him. We may trust in our advocate; for He pleads His own merits in our behalf.—The Review and Herald, Aug. 15, 1893.*

*Christ glorified not Himself in being made High Priest. God gave Him His appointment to the priesthood. He was to be an example to all the human family. He qualified Himself to be, not only the representative of the race, but their Advocate, so that every soul if he will may say, I have a Friend at court. He is a High Priest that can be touched with the feelings of our infirmities.—Manuscript 101, 1897.*

Jesus is officiating in the presence of God, offering up His shed blood, as it had been a lamb slain. Jesus presents the oblation offered for every offense and every shortcoming of the sinner.

*Christ, our Mediator, and the Holy Spirit are constantly interceding in man's behalf, but the Spirit pleads not for us as does Christ who presents His blood, shed from the foundation of the world; the Spirit works upon our hearts, drawing out prayers and penitence, praise and thanksgiving.—Manuscript 50, 1900 (SDA Bible Commentary, vol. 6, on Rom. 8:26, 34).*

When Christ ascended to heaven, He ascended as our advocate. *We always have a friend at court. And from on high Christ sends His representative to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. The Holy Spirit gives the divine anointing to all who receive Christ.—The Christian Educator, August, 1897, p. 22.*

*He has paid the ransom money for the whole world. All may be saved through Him. He will present those who believe on Him to God as loyal subjects of His kingdom. He will be their Mediator as well as their Redeemer.—Manuscript 41, 1896.*

*When Christ died upon the cross of Calvary, a new and living way was opened to both Jew and Gentile. The Saviour was henceforth to officiate as priest and advocate in the heaven of heavens. Henceforth the blood of beasts offered for sins was valueless, for the Lamb of God had died for the sins of the world.*—Und. Manuscript 127.

*The arm that raised the human family from the ruin which Satan has brought upon the race through his temptations, is the arm which has preserved the inhabitants of other worlds from sin.* Every world throughout immensity engages the care and support of the Father and the Son; and this care is constantly exercised for fallen humanity. *Christ is mediating in behalf of man, and the order of unseen worlds also is preserved by His mediatorial work.* Are not these themes of sufficient magnitude and importance to engage our thoughts, and call forth our gratitude and adoration to God?—*The Review and Herald*, Jan. 11, 1881; *Messages to Young People*, p. 254.

#### **IX. Became Man That He Might Become Mediator**

*Jesus became a man that He might mediate between man and God. He clothed His divinity with humanity, He associated with the human race, that with His long human arm He might encircle humanity, and with His divine arm grasp the throne of Divinity. And this, that He might restore to man the original mind which he lost in Eden through Satan's alluring temptation; that man might realize that it is for his present and eternal good to obey the requirements of God. Disobedience is not in accordance with the nature which God gave to man in Eden.*—Letter 121, 1897.

*The completeness of His humanity, the perfection of His divinity, form for us a strong ground upon which we may be brought into reconciliation with God.* It was when we were yet sinners that Christ died for us. We have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins. *His nail-pierced hands are out-reached toward heaven and earth. With one hand He lays hold of sinners upon earth, and with the other He grasps the throne of the Infinite, and thus He makes reconciliation for us.* Christ is today standing as our Advocate before the Father. He is the one Mediator between God and man. *Bearing the marks of His crucifixion, He pleads the causes of our souls.*—Letter 35, 1894.

**X. Heavenly Advocate Retains Human Nature Forever**

*Christ ascended to heaven, bearing a sanctified, holy humanity. He took this humanity with Him into the heavenly courts, and through the eternal ages He will bear it, as the One who has redeemed every human being in the city of God.—The Review and Herald, March 9, 1905.*

*By His appointment He [the Father] has placed at His altar an Advocate clothed with our nature. As our Intercessor, His office work is to introduce us to God as His sons and daughters. Christ intercedes in behalf of those who have received Him. To them He gives power, by virtue of His own merits, to become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King.—Testimonies, vol. 6, pp. 363, 364.*

*It is our privilege to contemplate Jesus by faith, and see Him standing between humanity and the eternal throne. He is our Advocate, presenting our prayers and offerings as spiritual sacrifices to God. Jesus is the great, sinless propitiation, and through His merit, God and man may hold converse together. Christ has carried His humanity into eternity. He stands before God as the representative of our race.—The Youth's Instructor, Oct. 28, 1897.*

*Jesus could give alone security to God; for He was equal with God. He alone could be a mediator between God and man; for He possessed divinity and humanity. Jesus could thus give security to both parties for the fulfillment of the prescribed conditions. As the Son of God He gives security to God in our behalf, and as the eternal Word, as one equal with the Father, He assures us of the Father's love to usward who believe His pledged word. When God would assure us of His immutable counsel of peace, He gives His only begotten Son to become one of the human family, forever to retain His human nature as a pledge that God will fulfil His word.—The Review and Herald, April 3, 1894.*

*The reconciliation of man to God could be accomplished only through a mediator who was equal with God, possessed of attributes that would dignify, and declare Him worthy to treat with the Infinite God in man's behalf, and also represent God to a fallen world. Man's substitute and surety must have man's nature, a connection with the human family whom He was to represent, and, as God's ambassador, He must partake of the divine nature, have a connection with the Infinite, in order to manifest God to the world, and be a mediator between God and man.—The Review and Herald, Dec. 22, 1891.*

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